

Mexican Life

Mexico's Monthly Review

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By García Cebal



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SAN MIGUEL Allende, in the state of Guanajuato and 229 miles northwest from Mexico City, is one of the towns that had to be included in the highway program of modern Mexico because of its unique appeal to tourists and students.

The present San Miguel Allende was founded by Spaniards, but very near the present town are to be found the remains of the original Amerindian site, known as Izcuinapan.

A few years after the Spanish Conquest by Hernán Cortés, in 1521, the adventuring Franciscan monk, Fra Juan de San Miguel, founded on the outskirts of Izcuinapan the town known then as San Miguel el Grande, and the first church was constructed there by his order.

The construction of the present monumental church was started during the first years of the 18th century.

The name San Miguel el Grande was changed in the 19th century to San Miguel Allende, in honor of Ignacio Allende, one of the principal leaders of Mexico's struggle for freedom from Spain.

Built on a hillside, San Miguel Allende has uneven and winding streets, which is one of its charms. Its altitude of 7,340 feet gives it a mild and pleasant climate.

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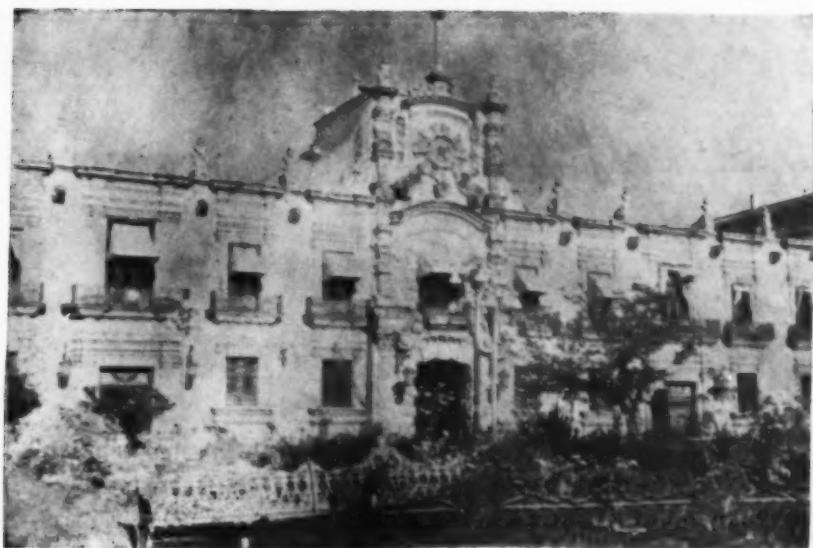
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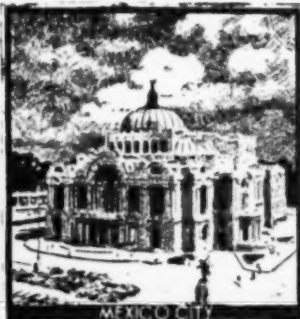
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HOWARD S. PHILLIPS

EDITOR

Strides of Economic Progress

WHEN President Miguel Alemán took over his high post five and a half years ago he declared that the task of his government would be centered on the basic aim of combatting poverty, that it was his purpose to seek every means whereby the living standards of the masses could attain a higher level. In pursuing this goal, President Alemán did not depart from the policy consistently maintained by the preceding administrations during the past twenty-five years. Each government has sought this goal; only in his case the pursuit having been based on a thoroughly formulated comprehensive program brought about most abundant results.

Now, that President Alemán's term in office is in its conclusive months, we can estimate to what extent his program has been effective. Remaining faithful to his pledge, the task he has imposed upon his government has been indeed characterized by a sustained, systematic and nation-wide effort to alleviate common poverty by increasing the scope of national production.

The following authoritative figures reveal the exact progress that has been achieved during the first four years of the present administration, or from 1946 to the end of 1950:

Taking the figure of 100 as representing the gross volume of national production in 1939, the index for 1946 was that of 124.3, rising to 183.8 for 1951. In agriculture, the production of corn, the country's basic food crop, rose from 3,800,000 tons in 1946 to 4,700,000 tons in 1950. Wheat production increased during the same period from 340,000 tons to 587,000 tons; that of rice from 139,000 tons to 186,600 tons, and that of cotton, which in 1946 amounted to 91,000 tons, rose to 263,000 tons in 1950. The rise in production of sugar-cane represents from 7,196,000 tons to 9,518,000. An increase of corresponding proportions has been achieved in practically all the minor crops.

An equally impressive increase in volume of production has been achieved in the industrial field. Basing this volume on the index figure of 100 in 1939, the increase in its three major branches is as follows: manufacture, 174.6 in 1946, increased to 228.2 in 1950; electric power, from 134.7 to 179.1, and petroleum, from 128 to 171.2.

While complete figures for the year 1951 are yet unavailable, it is officially estimated that the general increase in production has exceeded that of the previous year.

Gross national income, which in 1939 was that 5,670,000,000.00 pesos, ascended in 1946 to 22,530,000,000.00 and to 35,300,000,000.00 pesos in 1950. Considering, however, the marked increase in prices during the above period, and basing the calculation on the real value of the peso as that which prevailed in 1935, the national income in 1939 was that of 4,460,000,000.00 pesos; in 1946 of 7,900,000,000.00, and in 1950 of 9,270,000,000.00 pesos.

Divided per capita, the gross increase in the national income, calculated on the index figure of 100 in 1939, represented 147 in 1946 and 161 in 1950. That

is to say, the increase in individual income during the first four years of the present regime has been approximately that of fifteen percent. Thus there can be no doubt regarding the improvement in the living conditions of Mexico's population. Fifteen percent may not be a spectacular improvement. It does not actually represent the liquidation of poverty. But for a country the large bulk of whose population has existed through centuries in dire want, it is a signal step forward. This improvement, moreover, represents but the initial benefits of the vast program of industrialization, electrification, reclamation of soil through irrigation, and the extension of railways and highways carried out by the government of Miguel Alemán. Its ultimate benefits will accrue in future years.

It can be said that the economic policy followed by this government during the past five years has brought about the greatest impetus of material development in the country's entire history, and that this development has been achieved through the employment of its own material resources of capital and human energy, without mortgaging its future with onerous debt. For its official program has been financed almost entirely with allotments from annual federal budgets and through the operation of internal credits.

Industrialization has been achieved largely with funds derived from the sale of bonds issued by the government-conducted institution, Nacional Financiera, whose present total emission amounts to 1,200,000,000.00 pesos. Being held by banks and numerous individual investors, these bonds attest wide public confidence in the official financing institution. A similar confidence in the country's future has been revealed by the public in the acquisition of Saving Certificates issued by the government-operated Patronato del Ahorro Nacional. This institution, likewise serving to finance industrial enterprise, has raised during the past twenty months 125,000,000.00 pesos from the sale of certificates to more than forty thousand small investors. While technically the bonds issued by both government institutions may be classed as a public debt, in reality, these institutions are rendering a banking service of borrowing money from the public and lending it to industrial concerns upon conditions of full security.

In addition to internal credit, the government's program has been facilitated by the long-term, low-interest loans from the U.S. Import-Export Bank and various private banks in the United States, which amount in total to 333,000,000.00 dollars. Of these available loans, however, the government has drawn to date 194,000,000.00 dollars and has liquidated 83,000,000.00, which leaves an outstanding debt of 111,000,000.00 dollars.

The figures presented above reveal to what extent President Alemán has realized his goal. No government can achieve a definitive task. The task carried out by Miguel Alemán, defining vast material progress, represents a brilliant phase of national endeavour. It sets a glowing example as well as a course for the future government to follow.

Charro

By Sylvia Martin

AS long as he remembers, Victor Gomez has taken part in the "jaripeo." As a boy he rode the bull, and he boasts that there was never one that could unseat him. As a man too old and broad for such bone-breaking exercise, he performs with horse and lariat.

Victor shares a small cattle ranch with three brothers. While his brothers stoically accept the monotonous round, asking nothing more, he lives only for the "jaripeo." There, competing with his peers for the thundering applause of the multitude, he is the hero of his dreams.

In villages and on ranches wherever cattle are raised, the "jaripeo" is the big event of the Lenten season. From the highly commercialized bullfighting in Mexico City, whose stars are often imported from Spain, to this people's rodeo open to any fearless fool or knowing cowman, is as far as from Hollywood to a country fair. The "jaripeo" is the natural flower of life on the range.

As in our western rodeo and in the "courses des taureaux" of southern France, the bulls are not killed. The cowboy's practical mind is revolted by the idea of murdering for sport such a valuable and valiant

animal. In the contest of man against beast, if the man is injured or killed, more glory to the beast. Even if Victor Gomez were the greatest cowboy on earth, his best efforts couldn't change the fact that the bull is the star performer of the "jaripeo."

The village of Amatitlán centers on a wide dirt plaza surrounded by sabino trees. About a month before Easter, piles of boards appear around the plaza, and one morning a ring of crude wooden bleachers, and fences rises under the sabinos. The plaza becomes an arena.

While the stands are hammered together, all through the countryside men groom their horses, polish saddles, and buy new serapes, sombreros, and kerchiefs to make a brave appearance. In patios and compounds, on the trails and in the fields, boys are practicing sidesteps and graceful turns, using an old rag or a torn shirt when they cannot dig up a cape. Many a family dog is pressed into the role of bull.

In Amatitlán, meanwhile, the village authorities are preoccupied. They are in charge, but only one part of the arrangements troubles them—the bulls.

For the rest, since the "jaripeo" is a very old fiesta, it more or less builds itself. The band, for example, is the same that has always played. Through the years its membership may change, man by man, but it remains the same five-piece ensemble delivering its fixed repertoire of three selections with a discordance so familiar that any improvement would be a form of treason. The carpenters, bull handlers, ticket sellers, peddlers and performers all know their duties as if they were born for that and nothing else. Mexicans are not efficient as we claim to know efficiency, and yet few of our organizations could put on an event the size of a "jaripeo" with so little waste motion.

But the bulls! On them is staked the prestige of Amatitlán. A Ferdinand who must be roped, pulled, and prodded into the arena and who, instead of breathing fire, ambles about trying to make friends, brings down jeers whose lasting memory may endanger the success of next year's "jaripeo."

The bulls are rented for the occasion from ranches and neighboring villages, their number depending on Amatitlán's resources. When the call goes out there is no need for Amatitlán to specify, "send us quick-footed 'toros' with murder in their hearts." Everybody knows what is wanted. But the bull has a tricky temperament. Many a notorious killer has strolled into the ring and planted himself in obstinate reflection.

There is no announcement, not even by word of mouth, about when the "jaripeo" will begin. We all know it will be on a Sunday afternoon, and that it will continue for every Sunday thereafter until Easter. Yet somehow on the first Sunday we are all there—neighbors, friends, children, visiting villagers, farmers, and cowboys.

When I passed the plaza yesterday it was as deserted as a graveyard. Today it is alive. The booths selling cold drinks, ices, tobacco, fruit—where did they come from? I hear the band playing selection number one, which means that a bull is in the ring. Wandering under the stands in search of a ticket seller, I look up to see the mottled seated rears of

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Charro." Wax Sculpture.

By Luis Hidalgo.





"Bay at Acapulco." Water Color.

By Myrtle Frankovits.

Ma and Junior

By Kim Schee

THE queerest guests I've ever had in my hotel? Realmente, Señor, that is a hard question to answer. I've had many queer ones the past five years, but to my mind, Ma and Junior were the queerest. I don't know them by any other name but Ma and Junior. *Diós mio*, what a pair!"

"Tell me about them," I said. And Don Antonio sucked at the straw of his Planter's Punch, wiped the perspiration from his forehead and flabby neck, cleared the phlegm from his throat and began.

"Muy bien, Señor, aquí está. Ma and Junior came to my hotel about a year ago. They hailed from some little town in Arkansas and had come by bus from Mexico City to Acapulco. Never in my life had I seen such a couple. Ma who couldn't have been a day under seventy had a face like a vulture; beady black eyes, a bony hooked nose, thin bloodless lips and a wattle of skin that hung loose from her chin. Si, Señor, I do not exaggerate. She reminded me immediately of a vulture. Moreover she was very skinny and short and she was dressed in black clear to her shoes except for an enormous hat which I never saw in Mexico until the tourists came. And Junior, *válgame Diós*, Junior was about fifty and very tall and as round as a barrel. Apart from a few strands of blond hair in front he was bald. His face was like a baby's Señor, just like a baby's: pink fat cheeks, bright red lips, blue eyes and hardly any beard at all. It was only because I am a hotel man that I was able to keep a straight face.

"Bien, Señor. They registered at my hotel and I gave them one of my smallest cabins near the beach. The only request they made I remember, was that the maid was not to clean their room. I thought at first they were man and wife because their name was the same and because the old lady seemed to henpeck Ju-

nior a lot. But a gringo at my hotel who speaks good Spanish soon put me straight and explained to me what Ma and Junior meant. From that time on I was curious and kept pretty close ta's on their doings.

They hadn't been at the hotel long before they fell into a strange sort of routine. They got up early in the morning, had their breakfast and would pick up their box lunch which they'd ordered the night before. They never talked to any one and seldom exchanged a word between themselves. Then they'd go down to the beach, she rigged out in an old-fashioned black bathing suit and he in a pair of sneakers and an old striped sweater and they would get into a delapidated row-boat they had hired by the week and off they'd go to a deserted island about a mile's distance from the shore, Junior sitting at the oarlocks like an overgrown lobster and Ma behind, looking like a vulture. They'd stay there all day until sunset and then they'd come back to the hotel for supper and after supper they'd return to their cabin. Their routine never changed. Just how they passed the day on that God-forsaken island no one could figure out. They never took anything with them to help pass the day, like fishing tackle or reading matter. Some of the guests had some pretty clever suggestions to offer, but I won't go into that. I made up my mind to find out what they did. It's one of the few times in my life I have bothered to find out how my guests occupy themselves. As a hotel man I learned a long time ago that it's bad policy. Si, Señor, a very bad policy."

"I didn't go to the island, but once, when they were away, I went to their cabin and what do you think I saw? No le hace, Señor, you'd never guess in a thousand years. Shells, Señor, sea-shells. Hundreds of them

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"Tehuannas," Water Color.

By Roberto de la Cueva del Rio.

Ixtepec by Night and Day

By Hudson Strode

THAT night in Ixtepec we dined well enough in a drab restaurant facing the railroad tracks. We had fish fresh from the Pacific, stewed rabbit, fried chicken, rice, and tomatoes, with thick slices of luscious pineapple for dessert. The price per person was forty-odd cents.

When we left the restaurant at nine the sidewalks seemed more crowded than they had been at eight, for news had got around that the four-o'clock train from Puerto Mexico might be turning up at any time now. The curb and the street glowed with charcoal braziers and burning sticks under impromptu stoves made of broken bricks. The atmosphere reeked of hot grease. The business-women mothers waiting for the train were preparing a last meal of the day for their sleepy youngsters, some of whom toddled perilously among the legs of pedestrians and the strolling soldiers from the military barracks.

The felicitous absence of crowding and noise in Juchitán was sharply contrasted in Ixtepec. The town seemed in ceaseless hubbub and motion. A distraught engine on a siding kept up an agitated screeching, apparently for no reason whatever. In all the cheap little eat shops, where the customers were served standing, loudmouthed entertainment blared from radios. Since there was no station toilet in this chief railroad center of the Isthmus, women were continually on the march with urgent youngsters to the shadow of marooned boxcars.

The mile-long street of Ixtepec that ran at a right angle to the tracks and ended at the station invariably

became a promenade after nine. The townspeople turned out to walk up and down the middle of the narrow, ugly street as contentedly as if it had been the luxurious Calle Florida in Buenos Aires at five in the afternoon. Everyone was bareheaded except the soldiers, and everyone said adiós. Instead of saying "Good evening" or "How do you do?" they all said "Goodbye"—"God be with you." In Ixtepec, adiós is both a greeting and a farewell. And since you passed the same persons again and again, you blessed and were blessed a hundred times during the nightly promenade. Since a blessing is a wish for the other person's happiness, perhaps the best thing that can be said about Ixtepec is that the citizens walk up and down the streets blessing each other between nine and eleven. Their voices were soft and their murmurings musical, and it was very agreeable to hear them commending each other to God, though some of the young men could hardly be said to have a holy expression in their eyes as they passed some particularly nubile feminine form.

At eleven o'clock, the four o'clock train had not yet arrived. The fires in the braziers had turned to ash. The children were asleep in heaps on the sidewalks. The businesswomen sat heavy-eyed on spread strips of cloth, waiting with absorbed Indian patience. In the pale street illumination that fell flickeringly on their bright-colored skirts and huipls, the night sidewalks looked as if littered with trampled chrysanthemums that had been scattered in a noon carnival.

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Figure holding dog. From Colima



Dog with Spout tail. From Colima.



Figure holding dog. From Veracruz

(Photos by the author, courtesy of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and the kind co-operation of the collectors: Ignacio Bernal, Franz Peschtwanger, Guillermo Echaniz and others who wish to remain anonymous.)

The Dogs of Ancient Mexico

By Fredrick A. Peterson

THE dog is reputed to be our best friend, and this statement also holds true about the dog in Ancient Mexico. We have all heard of cases in which a dog risked or gave its life to save its master, but how often have we heard that the dog's life was taken to feed the master? Yet we know for certain that such was the case in Mexico before and after the conquest. Padre Francisco Javier Clavigero in his book "Historia Antigua de Mexico" remarks: (Vol. I, Chap. XII).

"The techichi, which in other countries is called also, was a quadruped that lived in Mexico and in other parts of America. Because its figure resembled that of the European "gozque," (from the latin Gothicus Canus), the Spanish also called them dogs. It was sad-faced, and it never barked nor did it ever complain, even though it were beaten. Its meat was edible and if we believe those who liked it, of good taste and nourishing. After the conquest of Mexico, the Spanish were extremely short of meat because the cattle on whose flesh they were fed in the Spanish Isles, were not yet transported to the mainland, so they had those little quadrupeds put into their butcheries, with the result that they ended the species, despite its being very numerous."

The dogs were brought to markets like Tlatelolco and to the special dog-market at Acolman, where they were seen and commented on by the conquerors Hernan Cortés, and Bernal Diaz del Castillo.

Although the Spanish "ended the species" with their voracious culinary forays upon the little fat dogs, still we have a very good idea of what the animals were like, as there are in existence quite a few depictions of the little creatures in the form of terracotta sculptures, comprising some of the best works of art in ancient Mexico. The greater part of the best

sculptures come from the state of Colima, where they are found in tombs, together with the bones of their masters, thus accounting for their remarkable state of preservation. Photographs of some of these dogs are reproduced in these pages, thanks to the generosity of the present owners and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. Most of them have been made with a reddish-brown slip, the reason for which will be made apparent later.

The dog is represented in many of the ancient codices and it is found to represent one of the days of the month. It also took the form of the God of Death, or of the Sun that goes down into the underworld.



Dog with Jug-head. From Colima.



Fat dog from Colima.

Bishop Landu, remembered by us as much for his burning of the codices as for his remarkable chronicle, "*Relación de las Cosas de Yucatán*," says to us in this latter work:

"The Indians were without many animals and they were in special need of those which were most necessary to serve man; yet they had others, the majority of which they used for food, but the only domesticated one was the dog, which did not know how to bark or to harm men, but they were useful for hunting purposes, as they flush partridges and other birds, chase deer for long periods, and many of them are good at following tracks. They are little and the Indians ate them in their feasts, but I think that they are now ashamed to do so, and think it is wrong to eat them. They claim that the dogs taste good."

This dog has been identified as the *Canis familiaris*, and is commonly called *Pek* in the Maya tongue. The *Maya Dictionary* states that it is also called *Ah bil* or *Kik bil*.

But besides giving up their lives that their masters could have food, the dogs also were participants in many rituals and religious ceremonies too numerous to mention here. Not only did the dog follow his master around on this earth, but he proved his final loyalty by accompanying him to the nether world. Padre Bernardino de Sahagún, has several interesting remarks to make on this point in his book, "*Historia*

Dog Bowl from Nayarit.



General de las Cosas de Nueva España": (Appendix, Chap. I, Tome 3, Vol. I).

"In the netherworld, whose God was *Mictlantecutli* and his wife *Mictēcāhuatl*, the dead had to wander past many danger spots. The deceased had to carry with him a little dog of reddish color, and around his neck there was tied some loose cotton cord; it is said that the dead swam on top of the little dog when they passed the river of the underworld that is called *Chiconauhuapan*, and when the deceased arrived before the devil that was called *Mictlantecutli*, they made an offering to him and presented him with the papers that they wore, and perfumed canes and loose cotton thread and colored thread, a blanket, a loin cloth, and shirts and all that they had wrapped up with them when they died. They burned up everything with the dead because they said that all the offerings that they made in this world went straight to the devil called *Mictlantecutli*. After four years had passed the deceased began his journey to the nine hells that he must pass. Then he would come to a very wide river and in that place lived and walked dogs on the edge of the river, where those who are dead must pass. It is also said that when the deceased arrived to the shores of the river the dogs looked



Dog Bowl. Origin unknown.

at him and the one that recognized him would start swimming toward him, and then would take his master across the river on his back; because of this the natives used to keep and raise the little dogs especially for this purpose; but they said that the dogs of white or black colored hair wouldn't swim and pass the river because the white-haired dog would say, "I am already washed," and the black-haired dog would say, "I am stained with very dark color that won't come off anyway, so I won't take you over," but only the reddish haired dog could take the dead over on his back; so it is that in this place of the underworld called *Chiconomictlan*, ended and finished the trials of the dead."

Padre Sahagún has also left us some valuable notes about dogs in general, which I have taken the liberty to translate:

"The dogs of this land have four names: *chichi*, *itzcuintli*, *xochiocoyotl*, and *tetlamin* or *teutzotl*. They are of different colors: black, white, ash, chestnut, brown, spotted, etc. Some are large and others are very small, short-haired and long-haired. Corpulent, sharp-nailed gentle and domestic; they follow their owners everywhere; wag their tail to show peace; growl, bark, lower their ears to the neck to show

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"At the Lake." Tempera.

By Manuel Gosses Serrano.

Don Odilón

By Dane Chandos

SESORA de los Bohorques arrived at my inn in a portly automobile, with a chauffeur, a maid, and a Pekingese, and announced herself as a relative of the González de la Comarcas. She was white haired, tall and upright, dressed in unrelieved black, and on her fingers, which were beautiful and much more youthful than her face, she wore several handsome diamonds in old-fashioned settings. She kept herself to herself and gave me no trouble at all, because when she wanted something she asked the servants directly. The maid slipped about like a shadow, and every morning the chauffeur washed the big car, whether it had been used or not. In the garage, beside my car, it had the air of a Great Dane being tolerant to a puppy. Every now and then the chauffeur washed my car too. The Pekingese was very aloof, and not even Tippet, who is the friend of all the world, could make him fraternize, and he and Monk ignored one another, even on the narrowest path of the huerta, each sniffing the air as they passed and looking into the distance.

Every morning Señora de los Bohorques had a big upholstered armchair taken out on the beach and set in the shade of the willows, and there she sat. She smoked a great many black Spanish cigarettes, but she neither read nor talked. Before luncheon she took a tiny glass of neat tequila, with some little titbit—slivers of cheese with olives or slices of avocado—which her maid prepared for her. She bowed to the other guests when she met them, went to Mass, and once a day asked for the radio to be tuned into the news. She listened without comment, bowed to my-

body, and withdrew to her room, where she spent many hours. After the commotion of some of my other guests she was a welcome change.

It was really by chance that I remembered her saint's day. I knew her name was Paciana, and I was reminded of the festival of San Paciano de las Flores when Cayetano asked for two days off to go to its celebration. I sent the old lady some flowers with felicitations on her "day of days," and in return she asked me to have a cocktail with her on the beach. When I arrived a second armchair had been brought out, the maid was hovering, and there were several kinds of canapé, including a horrid mass of minxte, threadlike whitish eels, which, when spread like a paste so that you no longer saw they were eels, tasted good. As a hostess, Señora de los Bohorques had manners of such gracious distinction that the tequila cocktail and eels took on the air of champagne and caviar, and I felt myself to be important.

The Spanish character is lyrical but not at all romantic. Like some splendid bird that, just as it seems to be of more than earthly substance dives to ground for a grub, so any Spaniard can speak in the phrases of a lyric poet, peppered with practical footnotes. Señora de los Bohorques talked like this, in a beautiful classic Spanish untouched by any slang, gesturing with her graceful fingers.

"I have known this lake, señor, since I was a girl, and when I have been unhappy, it has always given me comfort, as if its waters washed my heart," she said. "See, the sails of the bonts as they come up over the horizon there—are they not like the breasts

of doves? And now that the railways are in such a lamentable state and gasoline and tires are dear, the boats are doing a very good business carrying freight."

It is fairly safe with Mexicans of the age and sort of my hostess to talk about Porfirio Díaz, and after a while I led the conversation round to him. Señora de los Bohorques had plenty to say about the old days of the great haciendas and the month-long visits, twenty strong, the days when a man could go alone and unarmed from one end of the land to the other in perfect safety, for when traveling you just asked for a rural guard. He rode ahead of you, armed to the teeth, and, arriving in a village at nightfall, he roused someone and demanded a room. He looked after the traveler like a child. "Put your bed here in the middle of the room, there may be scorpions and animals in the walls, and I shall sleep beside you on the floor." He attended to food and everything. All this, with fodder for both horses, cost the traveler half a dollar daily. Then she got onto the centenary celebrations of 1910.

"At the great ball in the Palacio Nacional there were ten thousand invited guests. All the galleries round the patio were reception and refreshment rooms, and in the first-floor galleries we danced. The illuminations were the last word of their day. There were delegates from all over the world, and such jewels and gowns as now one can hardly believe ever existed. The men blazed with stars and ribbons, and the women were princesses from the country of the fairies. They waltzed in falls of lace and rainbows of gauze amid a rain of diamonds. And did you know that it was one of the first times that a card system was used for carriages?"

Just then Candelaria came bustling down to us.

"Imagine, señor—with your permission, señora—imagine what has happened. Don Odilón has left, and he has gone to his home, and what about the electric light, for who knows if that young brother of his can put on the motor?"

Now Odilón was the mechanic of the principal corn mill of the village. He was an excellent mechanic, and he did a number of odd jobs on the side. He had installed all my plumbing and electric wiring; he mended automobiles and radios; he dealt with sewing machines and typewriters. He had prospered and, besides owning various pieces of land that he rented out or worked with a sharecropper, he had built himself a house. You would have said he was sitting pretty. Mexicans will not infrequently abandon responsibilities or duties out of mere pique or caprice, but Odilón had seemed a steady sort.

"How long will he be away?" I asked.

"Oh, he won't come back, pues," said Candelaria.

"Why not?"

"It's like this," she went on. "His wife, that Socorro, has left him. It is true that he often beat her with sticks, but he had married her by law, *pues*. It happened that the father of her first child has just returned to the village, and she left Odilón and went to him."

Candelaria paused, stripped a branch from a willow tree, and twirled it as a fly whisk.

"The father of her child had been away for three years. He's been in prison, because he killed a man over there in Tizapán, or so they say, though they're very bad people over there anyway. But now he's out, and Socorro's gone back to him. So Odilón has left."

It seemed to me that Odilón was acting very foolishly. He was a good enough mechanic to get a job anywhere, but in Ajijic he had been very well placed.

"But what else could he do?" said Candelaria. "After that he couldn't stay."

"Certainly not," said Señora de los Bohorques, and the diamonds flashed on her fine white fingers. "No true man could stay. He had been shamed before the village."

Shore Trees

By Daniel Smythe

THE wind blows hard to bend their backs;
The salt is at their lips,
From a broad field that has no tracks,
They watch the tiny ships.

Gaunt watchers of the waves' wide loom,
They hold this point of land . . .
In front, the sea's enormous room,
Behind, the unfirm sand.



Panoramic View of the new University City.

Photo. By Cia. Mexicana Aeroloto. S. A.

Mexico's New University City

By Henry A. Shute

THE magnificent University City which is being erected in the section known as El Pedregal, beyond Villa Obregon, not only represents the outstanding building project in the Federal District, but also a signal task of architectural innovation in the planning and construction of educational institutions.

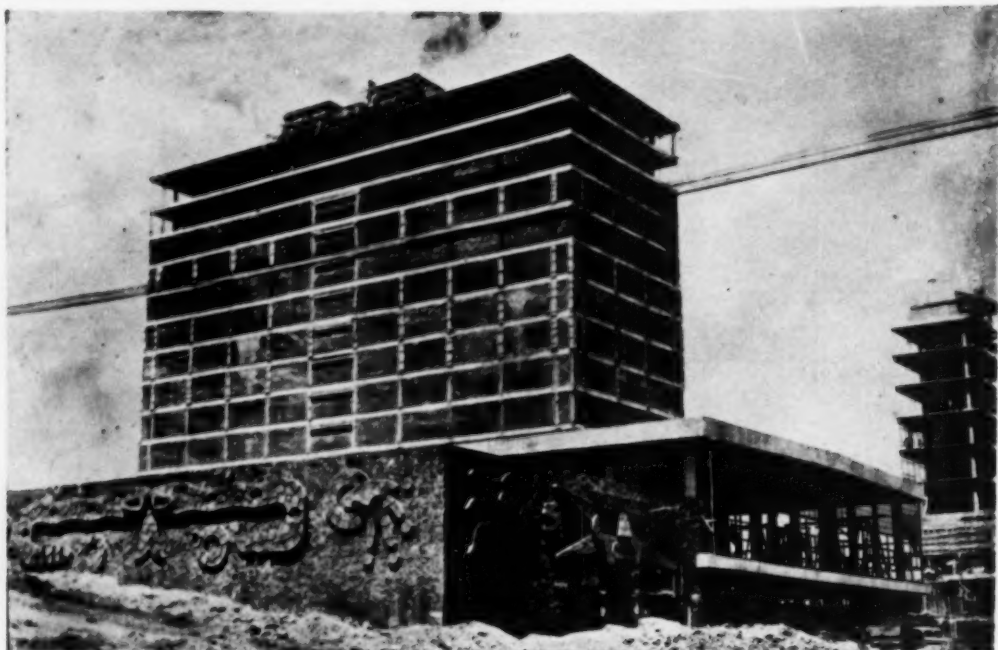
Representing an investment of more than a hundred and seventy million pesos (approximately, 20 million dollars) the group of monumental structures covers an area of seven million three hundred square meters (more than seventeen hundred acres), and will house all the departments of the National University. This area is part of a lava flow, from the extinct volcano of Ajusco that for centuries was a stony wilderness. Now the lava rock is being quarried and used in buildings of an ultra-modern functional design.

The oldest institution of higher learning on this hemisphere, the National University will now occupy the site of its oldest known civilization, for it was under the petrified lava of this area that the prehistoric remains of the "Pedregal man" were found. The area

is traversed by the highway to Cuernavaca, Taxco and Acapulco, forming a section of Avenida Insurgentes, the longest thoroughfare in Mexico City, which forms part of the longest highway in the Republic—the Pan American Highway—extending from the border of the United States to that of Guatemala. It is adjacent to the residential zone of Villa Obregon (San Angel) to the North and the archaeological zone of Cuicuilco to the South.

The outstanding view, the amplitude of space, the benevolence of climate and the facilities of communication with the center of the city enable one to apply to the Pedregal the words of King Alfonso X, called "The Wise," spoken in the 13th. century in reference to the University of Salamanca: "...Pure air and beautiful views must surround the Villa of Study, in order that the teachers who dispense knowledge and their students who would absorb it may find pleasant relaxation in the evenings, when they rise weary of studying and retire to the peace and pleasure of their lodgings."

• • •



Central Library Building.

Photo. By Saul Molina.

The project for the construction of the University City was initiated in 1942 by Dr. Rodolfo Brito Foucher, then Rector of the University, who petitioned the government to expropriate an area of more than twelve million square meters in lots belonging to the municipalities of Tlalpam, Padierna, Copileo and San Jeronimo Aculco, located towards the South of the city along the 16th kilometer of the Avenida Insurgentes.

Since then talks and plans were exchanged between interested prominent people, and some money was raised for the project, but nothing concrete was achieved. It was not until a University man, Miguel Alemán, became the nation's President, that sufficient

Sciences Building.

Photo. By Saul Molina.



impetus was lent the project to carry it into reality. The successful completion of this vast and complicated undertaking is largely due to the efforts of President Alemán.

The planning of the University City of Mexico was carried out upon an integral scheme, which takes in account the basic physical, human, economic, political and administrative factors. What is being built represents a veritable scholastic city, designed to cope with all the problems and specific functions of a community whose population will equal an average size city.

The University City of Mexico does not represent a simple transfer or a mere change of location, but a complete structural transformation in the physical, social, ethical and pedagogical factors of the old National University, in the aim of integrating a veritable cultural center, of creating an authentic community of teachers and pupils, wherein classical learning may be fused with scientific knowledge and the dynamic spirit of our age so as to decisively influence the development of coming generations and thereby the destiny of the country at large.

More than five thousand workmen, supervised by a hundred and seventy-five engineers and architects, are rushing the new plant to completion. Already finished is the Olympic Stadium seating 110,000 persons. When completed, University City will provide room for 30,000 students.

* * *

The following zones comprise the plan of the University City:

TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE ZONE:

This zone includes the buildings destined for the Schools, Institutes, and Administrative offices. It is formed as follows:

SCHOOL OF SCIENCES AND INSTITUTES:

Tower of Research Institute, section of Class-rooms, section of Laboratories, Library, Administrative offices, Museum, and an Auditorium with a capacity for seven hundred persons.



Olympic Stadium.

Photo. By Saul Molina.

HUMANITIES

This section includes the Schools of Economy, Law, Philosophy and Letters, with annexes housing Institutes, Auditorium and Library. The building housing the classrooms is one of the longest in the world. It measures three hundred and twenty-four meters in length, which is a hundred and ten meters more than the facade of the National Palace.

COMMERCE AND ADMINISTRATION SCHOOL

Comprising buildings for classrooms, administrative offices and different Institutes.

PHYSICS AND NUCLEAR INSTITUTE

Housed in a specially designed building, this Institute includes classrooms, laboratories, and a pavilion with aluminum plates to accommodate a Van de Graaff Disintegrator of Atoms, the first to be had in Latin America. On its western side it has an ample space surrounded by a stone wall, as security zone, which is called "The Garden of Radiation."

DEPARTMENT OF COSMIC RAYS

This is a small structure with a concrete vault whose thickness in the central part is that of one and a half centimeters, so as to allow the transmission of cosmic radiation.

ENGINEERING SCHOOL

This school is housed in a large five-story building, containing classrooms, administrative offices and laboratories.

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

The building assigned for this school includes classrooms, seven pavilions for workshops and an annex for a Museum.

RECTORY

The Rectory occupies a fourteen-story building where general administrative services will be maintained.

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Humanities Building.

Photo. By Saul Molina.



Patterns of an Old City

THE INTRUDER

By Hower. S. Phillips

SALDIVAR was aroused from his sleep by a dream wherein he was inexplicably striving to drive a nail into an unyielding wooden board which presently seemed to have changed into a slab of stone, when he realized that someone was actually rapping on his door. The rapping, halting, intermittent, alarmed him, for it was very seldom indeed that anyone ever approached his door, and much less at this unusual hour.

He rose from his bed, switched on the light, walked on bare feet across the two tiny rooms of his flat and pulled the latch. Cautiously he partly opened the door and looked out. At first he could not discern the face of the man who stood below the threshold, though the large round head and hulking shoulders seemed to be of someone who was not a total stranger. "Que pasa?" he said. "What is it?"

The man remained silent, apparently staring at him and unable to speak.

"What do you want?" Saldivar insisted.

The man uttered a sound that was both a groan and a gasp and in a strangely labored voice finally said: "Please... Please let me in. Let me go inside. Le suplico."

Baffled and fearful, Saldivar opened the door entirely and stepped aside. The man walked in, his large body, clothed in faded dungarees and a soiled undershirt, swayed heavily as he took a few steps forward and stopped in the middle of the front room. By then Saldivar recalled that he was the man who lived in the flat almost across the tenement court. The man stood staring at him without uttering a word, breathing with effort, his bulky torso bulging out of the undershirt, beads of sweat glistening on his forehead and under the dishevelled fuzz of his almost bald head. Watching him, Saldivar's wonder yielded to sheer fright. "What is it?" he said striving to keep a firm voice. "What do you want?"

The man's heavy lips moved without emitting a sound, his eyes stared at him wildly, then amid his tortured breathing, with an exhausting effort, he muttered, "I... I had to... I had to go somewhere... I... I came here... because someone had to let me in... I did something. I... I..." and broke off in a hoarse inarticulate sound.

Completely nonplussed Saldivar, in turn, stared at his visitor, then striving to conceal his distress and muster a stern voice, said: "But look, what does this mean?" What is it that you want from me?"

The man swayed from side to side, then reached out as if to grasp something, and let his arms drop limply. "I had to... to go somewhere. You don't know me, but you... you... must know about this... I must tell you... I must..."

He is mad, Saldivar thought. He is out of his mind. He might do something to me. He wondered if he should not open the door and try to get him out, coax him out somehow, without offending him, or whether he should go on talking to him. Then, unable to check the tremor in his voice, he said: "Listen, I do not understand. What is it you are trying to tell me? What can I do for you?"

The man staggered by him and into the bedroom and slumped on the edge of his bed. "I want to tell you," he said as Saldivar, now totally dismayed, came near him. "Tell you what I... that I... to tell you that I... I killed someone. I just killed my woman. I..." He held up his large stubby hands and looked

at them with amaze. "These hands. With these hands, You see, I killed her."

The intruder's eyes, fixed in a wild unblinking stare at Saldivar, sent a cold shiver up his spine. He was possessed by a bewildering sense of stark unreality. The man's intrusion seemed to him a grotesque error, a ghastly joke, a chimerical vision. He felt an impulse to run, to hide himself, to seek protection; but he could not move. He stood powerless, fixed, facing the man. Then, when his knees began to yield perilously, he pulled over a chair and lowered himself limply over its worn straw seat.

"You killed a woman?" he muttered. "You are actually telling me that you killed her... And now you came here to hide? You want me to... to... What do you want me to do?"

A flash of comprehension passed through the staring eyes. The lips moved with a laborious slowness. "Yes. That's it. To hide... I... I have no place to hide... I had to go away from it. I could not stay there. I came here because... I don't know... I need help... I am... Le suplico... I need help."

Now the sense of unreality yielded in Saldivar's mind to a fearful perception. No. He is not mad, he thought. What he tells me is true. It is not a delirium. The man is a murderer. He confessed his deed to me. He confessed it, and now I am sharing it with him.

He was staggered and rendered speechless by this comprehension. His inadvertent involvement in a major tragedy was an experience for which he had been unprepared by life. Like a sudden crushing disaster the intrusion shattered the staid and peaceful routine of his existence. It broke its detached and sheltered rhythm, wrenched him out of his tranquil seclusion and hurled him into turmoil.

* * *

Forty-seven years of living had not prepared Saldivar for an emergency like this. His life had followed a restricted rut; his daily experience had been so utterly circumscribed by habit and reiterated performance, his intrinsic existence was so totally confined to his own small personal concerns—the trite and undisturbed routine of carrying out a stipulated daily task exacted by the need of self-preservation—that he had never acquired the capacity for concern in others, or even the slightest degree of direct curiosity in surrounding life.

Each day he got up at seven, spunged himself at the hydrant of his tiny kitchen, shaved, dressed, boiled a pot of coffee, placed a paper bag of bread rolls he had bought the night before on the little table in the front room, ate his breakfast, made up his bed, tidied up his quarters with a broom and rag, donned his coat, locked the front door, and walked the length of several blocks, arriving punctually at nine to begin his day's shift in the department of third-class mail of the central post office.

Nine pesos and sixty-four centavos as a daily wage would hardly suffice for a man with a family; but it was more than sufficient for Saldivar's modest needs. True, a new suit was a signal event which occurred only once in two years or so, and he knew how a shirt could be worn till it literally fell apart by taking it to a shop where its frayed cuffs and collars were turned, and he was adept at mending his sox.

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CHICHEN ITZA. Photo.

By Mary Saint Albans.

The Mayas and Their Architecture

By Trent Elwood Sanford

TO GO from the Archaic civilization of the plateau to the civilizations in the tropical lowlands of the Gulf Coast, and especially to that of the better known Mayas farther to the south and east, is to go from hypothetical dates to actual dates; for these lowland civilizations had perfected a calendar which was far in advance of anything in Europe until a thousand years later. And to go from the Olmeca country to the country of the magnificent Mayas is to go from a land now proving to be rich in sculptural remains but with an architecture chiefly of earth to a land rich not only in sculpture but in a stone architecture which, in many respects, had reached a high state of perfection. The Mayas had built whole cities of stone buildings which in their individual examples displayed a wealth of architectural beauty and in their grouping displayed an appreciation of city planning which, even in this day of advanced (but largely unfulfilled) ideas on the subject, is amazing.

Because of their calendar, archaeologists have determined that the Mayas appeared in history some six centuries before the time of Christ; and it is now known that their earliest cities existed during the early years of the Christian era. Again it was agriculture, chiefly the raising of maize, that made possible their civilization, and it was the fact that they were primarily farmers and needed information about

the seasons for the successful raising of crops that gave rise to their knowledge of astronomy and their progress in the measurement of time.

The success of the Mayas in farming, based to a large degree on their astronomical knowledge, made possible the accumulation of food reserves, which, in turn, gave them the leisure time to devote to intellectual pursuits. That, combined with an abundance of limestone, brought about their magnificent architecture and their well-planned ceremonial centers.

It was during a period which substantially antedates that of the so-called "Dark Ages" in Europe that there grew up beyond the Isthmus of Tehuantepec many cities scattered throughout an area which extended from what is now the state of Chiapas in Mexico into Honduras, and even northward into Yucatán. The first of these cities, in fact, go back to a period as early as the Augustan Age in Rome. While his august majesty, through jealousy of his great-uncle Julius, was nonechalantly taking a day away from February to add it to his own month, and his people were struggling with clumsy Roman numerals, the Mayas had worked out divisions of the year based on much greater astronomical accuracy, and were thoroughly conversant with a system of numbers involving the use of the abstract quantity of zero—had arrived at the latter, in fact, several hundred years before such a system had been separately invented

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Railways Progress in Mexico from Cardenas to Aleman

By Stewart Morton

THE railway program pursued by General Lázaro Cárdenas, President of Mexico during the period 1935-1941, was based on two fundamental aims: to fully nationalize the railways of the country, and to construct various lines that would complete its network, in order that it would efficiently serve the nation's economic and social development. Both of these aims were in their essence inspired by the sole objective to provide the country with a system of rail communication that could adequately serve its needs.

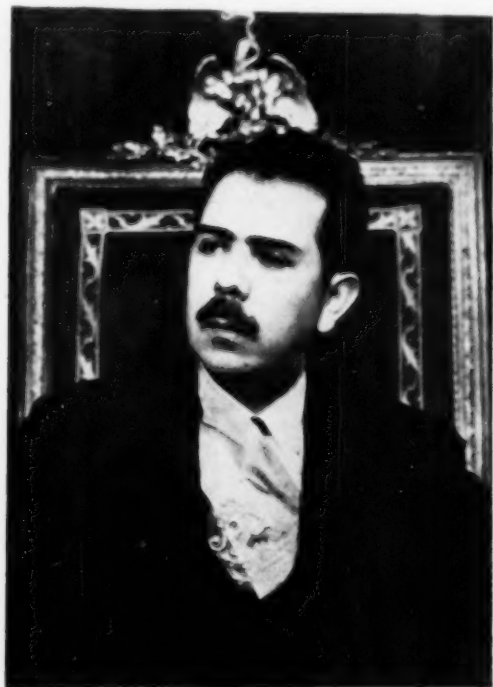
As regards the aim of full nationalization, in order to avoid an erroneous impression, it must be pointed out that while the National Railways were during the Cárdenas regime national property and had been under control of the federal government for some time, government was actually but part-owner of the system. This was due to the fact that the consolidation of the lines, carried out by the government of Porfirio Díaz in 1908, gave the Mexican government the possession of only fifty-one percent of the shares constituting the Company of the National Railways of Mexico, which was formed that year through the fusion of the two main railway companies then operating in the country—the Central Railway and the National Railway—both of which were foreign pro-

perty. At this fusion forty-nine percent of the shares in the new company were retained by private owners abroad.

The government was satisfied in making this deal to merely secure the position of major stockholder, for the administration of the system was left in the hands of a Directing Board which was controlled from the outset by the former managers of the Central and National lines.

In 1914, compelled by military necessity, the First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army, Don Venustiano Carranza, took over the railway lines, and in the course of the following years, largely through inertia than the stipulations in the consolidation agreement of 1908, the government has had in its charge the administration of the lines.

Upon the formation in 1908 of the National Railways of Mexico, the federal government assumed the responsibility as guarantor in the matter of payment to the shareholders of the principal and interests on



General Lázaro Cárdenas, President of Mexico from 1935 to 1941, who initiated the vast railway program.



President Miguel Alemán, who concluded the railway program planned and initiated by President Cárdenas.



President Miguel Alemán, Lic. Manuel R. Palacios, General Manager of the National Railways, and Lic. Ramón Beteta, Secretary of Treasury, during a journey of railway inspection.

the capitalization which served to create the new company.

For reasons which are unnecessary to examine here, the National Railway were unable to pay dividends to the private shareholders, thus acquiring a continuously growing debt for which the government was held responsible. Hence, the succeeding federal governments, beginning with that of General Alvaro Obregón, have unavailingly sought means of arranging a settlement of this debt through committees of international bankers representing the foreign shareholders.

The agreements De la Huerta-Lamont in 1923 and that of Pani-Lamont in 1925 defined the fruitless efforts made by the government of Obregón and Calles to solve the onerous problem of the outstanding debt.

The National Railways system, incapacitated for multiple reasons not only to comply with its financial obligations, but to renew its tracks and equipment, found itself from year to year in a more ruinous state; its outstanding debt growing progressively until it reached a hopelessly exorbitant figure during the first year of the Cárdenas regime. As time passed, the financial burden constituted by this federal debt, assumed the proportions of a problem without solution. And this deplorable situation not only offered no prospects of feasible improvement, but gradually rendered more obvious the grave financial error committed by the government of General Díaz in forming in 1908 the National Railways of Mexico from the greatly over-capitalized shares of the former Central and National lines, which, indeed, were almost worthless at that time.

The private shareholders, controlling forty-nine percent of the stock, were, theoretically, the only ones who benefited through this situation, because the Mexican government, unable to pay dividends, owed them more and more money as time went on.

Mexico, thus, found itself in a blind alley, from which it did not emerge until the year 1937 when President Cárdenas decided to expropriate the forty-nine percent of the shares held by foreign investors.

Through this measure President Cárdenas achieved two objectives of incalculable importance: On the

one hand he stopped the growth of a debt which the country would never be able to pay if it were allowed to increase indefinitely, by wresting through legal means from private investors—who, it must be stressed, did nothing to improve the railway system or its service—the privilege to accumulate interests, thanks to the nearsighted generosity of General Díaz and his Minister Limantour.

On the other hand, in becoming the absolute owner of the National Railways, the nation would be able to manage them in a manner that would directly serve the nation's interests, that would promote Mexico's development and amply satisfy its needs in the field of transportation.

The nationalization of the railways was consistent with the nationalistic and democratic policy of President Cárdenas, whose regime always pursued the goal of obtaining state ownership of the means whose function could determine the future economic development of the country. Thus it was a measure adjusted to the vigorous pace of transformation which during that period animated the economic life of the Republic.

As consequence of this act, there was left, of course, the matter of liquidating the principal and interests

Work on the Sonora-Baja California line during the early stages.





Cutting a path through the jungle to build the Sureste Railway.

of the debt contracted by the government with the private shareholders up to 1937. And it is to the high credit of the government of President Miguel Alemán that this matter was solved through the means of ably managed financial deals negotiated by it, whereby the outstanding claims were reduced to only a portion of their exorbitant original figure.

Mexico, under the government of Alemán, is punctually paying the stipulated installments of the railway debt, whose growth was definitely stopped in 1937 by the expropriation decree of the Cardenas government. And thanks to the apt arrangements made by the Secretary of the Treasury, Lic. Ramón Beteta, it is liquidating this debt on conditions that are in every other way quite favorable to this country.

In this manner President Alemán completed the task of nationalizing the National Railways of Mexico. He has also achieved the goal initially pursued by President Cárdenas of fully placing these lines at the service of Mexico; for the National Railways, thoroughly modernized and rehabilitated by the present government are today decisively contributing to the economic and social progress of the country.

In this brilliant achievement a place of special distinction belongs to the present General Manager of the lines, Lic. Manuel R. Palacios. For in carrying out with such admirable efficiency the vast project of railway rehabilitation he has been guided by the salient idea that the final aim of this rehabilitation is to serve the interests of the country and to promote its future growth.

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW RAILWAYS

Next to nationalization, the other major phase of the Cárdenas railway program involved the construction of various new lines, in order to complete the railway network and render possible an unimpeded and farflung transportation of the country's resources, and thereby to economically integrate its entire territory.

With the construction of such new lines President Cárdenas sought to correct in every way possible the defectively traced routes upon which the railways had been originally planned and built—to correct the work of foreign companies whose essential purpose was not

that of serving national interests but of merely facilitating the shipment of raw materials out of the country.

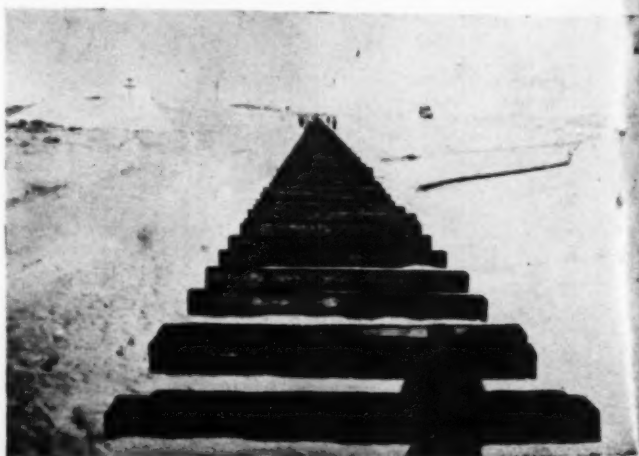
So as not to further complicate the grave problems of the National Railways, at the outset of his administration President Cárdenas founded an organization, titled "Lineas Ferreas de Mexico, S. A.," whose task was directed at the acquisition of existing lines and construction of new ones.

The plan of construction formulated by this organization comprised the following routes:

- A) From Mazatlán to Durango.
- B) From Uruapan to a point on the Balsas river, which could be extended to the Pacific coast, either in the state of Guerrero or Michoacán (the project stipulated that the line would reach Zihuatanejo).
- C) From Ejutla, Oaxaca, to a point on the Pacific coast in the same State.
- D) From Jesús Carranza to Campeche, to form a junction with the United Railways of Yucatán (Sureste Railways).
- E) From the station of Benjamin Hill in Sonora, on the Southern Pacific Railway, to Puerto Peñasco and Mexicali, Baja California.

As may be seen from the above, the project of the Cárdenas government consisted in its general scheme of completing the rail system and of extending it toward the coastal regions, which, in terms of natural resources and possibilities of future exploitation, are

Crossties stretching across the Desert in the construction of the Sonora-Baja California Railway.





Bulldozers attacking the sandy waste of the Altar Desert during the early phases of construction work on the Sonora-Baja California Railway.

among the richest in Mexico. The new lines were intended to retrieve from isolation vast regions of truly enormous potential wealth, such as those of the Southwestern states and the coasts of Guerrero, Michoacán and Oaxaca, and to link the Pacific with the heart of national territory through the short and direct line from East to West between Mazatlán and Durango, which, on the other hand, is joined with Mexico's principal rail lines extending from North to South.

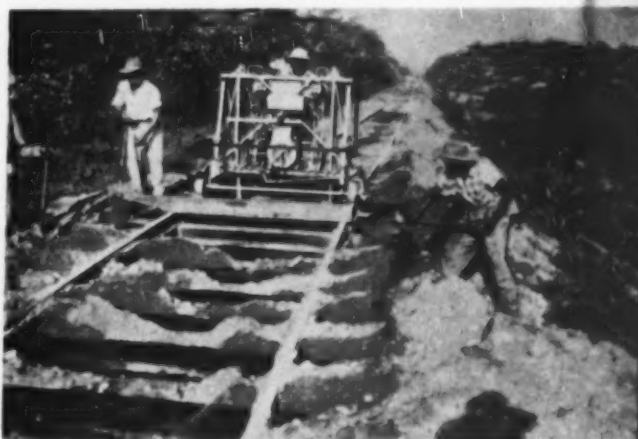
The grave and complicated problems which had to be confronted by the government of Lázaro Cárdenas—a government which lent impetus to one of the most significant stages in the course of national development—impeded it from materializing its program of railway construction. But the comprehensive plan it formulated, revealing the clear vision of President Cárdenas, has guided the program of succeeding governments.

In addition to the great effort represented in the rehabilitation of the National Railways, the government of President Alemán has concluded the construction of the important Sureste Railway initiated by President Cárdenas and continued by President Avila Camacho, and is working intensely on the construction of the Durango-Mazatlán line, which is now reaching completion, as well as on the short line between Mexico City and Tampico.

The present government has also concluded the building of the highly important line between the station of Benjamin Hill, Puerto Peñasco and Mexicali.

which brought to an end the isolation of the peninsula of Baja California from the main body of Mexican territory.

In this way the government of President Alemán has lent a mighty impulse to the great task begun fifteen years ago of completing the country's network of railways—a task whose inception was due to the valor and foresight of President Cárdenas.



Leveling the roadbed along the Sureste Railway.



Placing cross-ties for the building of the Sureste Railway.

The Federal District's New Prison for Women

By Gerald Thomby

AMONG the numerous major projects carried out at this time by the municipal government—the Department of the Federal District—the Prison for Women which is being built along the Ixtapafia-Puebla road, near the town of Santiago Achualtepec, precinct of Ixtapala, is of outstanding importance.

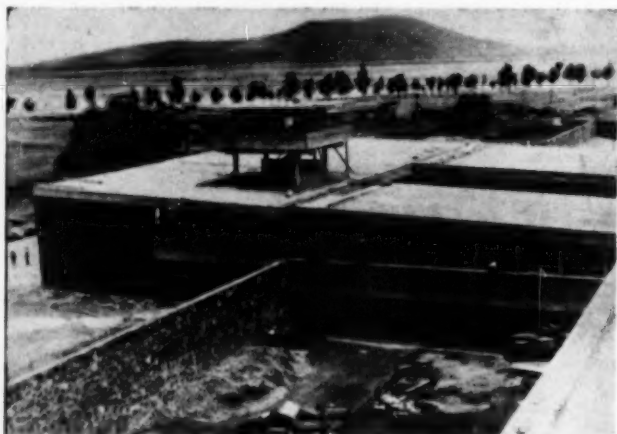
In providing room for four hundred inmates, it will relieve the serious problem of congestion in the old Penitentiary of the Federal District, and at the same time introduce a new type of penal institution wherein the goal of social regeneration takes precedence over mere punishment.

Occupying an area of 75,000 square meters, its architectural design the new prison will bear no resemblance to penitentiaries of the grim traditional types. In its general aspects the main structure, which is now nearing completion, will look more like a school or a hospital.

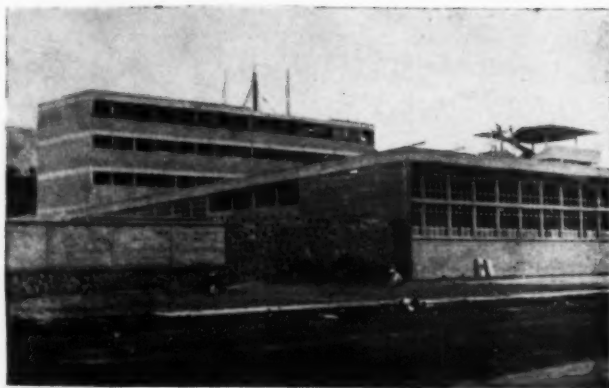
Its ground floor has a wide entrance platform fronting an ample vestibule which will house administrative offices, information department, registry office for visitors, entrance passages for inmates with

guard service, department for medical examination, lavatories for the staff as well as for the inmates, cloakrooms, general warehouses, kitchens and refrigerators, laundry with a daily capacity of 2,000 kilos of clothes, warehouse for same, and a number of spacious work-rooms where the inmates will dedicate themselves to such occupations as sewing, dressmaking, millinery, shoe-making, beauty culture, etc. Steam boilers and refuse incineration plants are also installed in this building.

The main building of the prison will comprise a public waiting room, a hall for lectures and picture projection, a library, classrooms for primary education of the inmates, salon for visitors, compartments for private visits (for husbands visiting inmate wives), a dining hall designed along modern hygienic lines, mechanized kitchen, bread and tortilla bakeries, installations for the washing of kitchen utensils, refrigeration and pantry rooms. The grounds adjacent to the main building will contain an enclosed gymnasium, courts for diverse sports, baths and lavatories, water storage tanks with a capacity of 500 cubic meters, and an artesian well 20 centimeters in diameter.



Section of one of the structures comprising the new Prison for Women.



Section of the Main Building.

The third and fourth floors of this building will comprise cell-blocks providing room for 400 inmates. Each cell includes all the necessary sanitary installations. Both floors will have baths which are sufficiently large to accommodate all of the inmates. The third floor will also contain a nursery, with dormitories, school rooms, dining room, kitchen and baths.

A thoroughly modern hospital, including operating rooms, X-Ray department, clinical rooms, pharmacy and dental clinic, and a ward with sixteen beds, will occupy the fifth floor.

A separate structure will provide quarters for prison guards and for an emergency electrical plant. In addition, a residence each, for the Prison Warden and the Administrator, will be provided.

The grounds of the prison are surrounded by a stone fence which is equipped with a double-strength lighting system that facilitates guarding inside and out, while booths for guards are being constructed outside the grounds in the streets that surround the prison. Parallel to the fence, inside the grounds, a wire-enclosed lane will further assure security.

Special installations for the treatment of sewerage waters, combined with an irrigation system, will fertilize truck farms and orchards whose produce will be utilized by the prison.

The capacity and services of this institution may be enlarged in the future, if this should become necessary. The materialization of this project, representing an approximate cost of six million pesos, defines another significant achievement in the brilliant record of the municipal administration headed by Lic. Fernando Casas Alemán.



Section wing of the Prison.

The Main Building of the Prison.



Modern functional architecture typifies the buildings of the new Prison for Women.



"Road in Churubusco." Oil.

By Jesús Ortiz Tajonar.

Among the Newer Painters

By Guillermo Rivas

IT IS always highly agreeable to encounter a young painter who without being precocious is clearly endeavouring to surpass mere imitativeness, who is striving to develop a personal voice rather than an echo, even if the voice is yet somewhat marred by the inevitable lack of complete certainty and refinement.

Two such young painters have been recently introduced to the public in exhibits offered by the Galería Arte Moderno: Jesús Ortiz Tajonar and José Luis Aguerrebere. Though completely unlike in expression, both young painters broadly share the common heritage of the modern Mexican trend. Both are disciples of the older contemporary Mexican masters, yet each in his own way seeks to surpass the confining margins of traditionalism; each strives to achieve through the specific native idiom evolved by this modern trend an individual utterance.

Ortiz Tajonar was born in Cuautla, Morelos, twenty and some odd years ago. The son of a carpenter who reared a family of fourteen children, he began drawing at a very early age, and upon graduating at the local primary school obtained his first employment as apprentice to a local painter who produced religious decorations for churches in the surrounding villages. At his father's death, compelled to increase his earnings so as to help his mother to support his younger brothers and sisters, he came to Mexico City and found work as a newspaper illustrator. Realizing after a time that this work did not satisfy his artistic needs,

he managed to find employment in one of the graphic arts studios of the Secretariat of Public Education, where he has been working along the side of Chavez Morado, Julio Prieto, Bartolozzi, and other recognized artists, producing illustrations for books, pamphlets and posters, while devoting all his free time to painting.

In this manner he gathered the canvases which comprised his recent exhibition. Varied in theme, ranging from mural panels to small genre scenes, his paintings manifest a period of fruitful exploration. Among these however, his landscapes impress me as the most convincing. Employing an exuberant palette and a technique which is somewhat alike to pointillism, he achieves in his minutely composed vistas a quality of sparkling iridescence. Nature is captured in his landscapes with a vibrant resonance.

The paintings of José Luis Aguerrebere, who is also in his twenties, are distinguished for their clearly traced line and a striking compositional style. His line, in fact, is never submerged; it is dominant in all his work, while his colors are essentially intended to enhance the rhythm and harmony of his compositions and not as a means of literal transcription. Rhythm, indeed—brought out in a fine and firm linear design which abounds in reiterated motive—is the salient note of his imaginatively stylized depictions.

Thus, through a subtly voiced lyricism, his work surmounts mere decorativeness and approaches the realm of poetry.



"Landscape at San Jerónimo." Oil.

By Jesús Ortiz Tajonar.



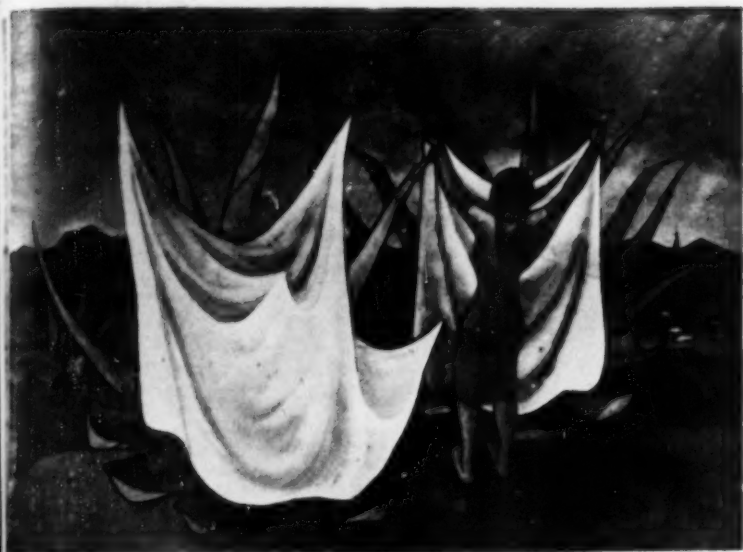
Self-Portrait. Oil.

By Jesús Ortiz Tajonar.



"Meat Vendor". Oil.

By José Luis Aguerrebere.



"Washwomen." Gouache.

By José Luis Aguerrerebere.



"Along the Road." Water Color.

By José Luis Aguerrerebere.



"Stone Hedge." Oil.

By José Luis Aguerrerebere.

Un Poco de Todo

MEXICAN HUNTERS OF 12,000 YEARS AGO

LAST March the news came that near Santa Maria Tepexan, a village that lies a half hour by automobile from Mexico City, stone weapons had been found near the bones of a mammoth. The discovery dovetails neatly with one of a human skeleton made five years ago near the same spot by Dr. Helmut de Terra.

Two projectile points (probably arrowheads of obsidian) were found between the ribs of the mammoth. Near by were an obsidian knife and a stone scraper. An animal as big and strong as a mammoth was not easily killed by arrows. Prehistoric hunters may have driven the mammoths into a swampy dorado, where the creature floundered about in a hopeless effort to extricate himself. It would be easy then to kill him. Or it may be that mammoths came of their own accord to the dorado and were then hunted. The knife and scraper found near the skeleton were probably used to remove meat from the skeleton.

Dr. de Terra surveyed the ancient shore line of a lake that once filled the Valley of Mexico at the end of the Ice Age and thus located the swampland or dorado. In this swamp there were many mammoth skeletons.

Mammoth bones have also been dug up in New Mexico and Colorado. But Dr. de Terra's discovery of human remains near the Mexican mammoth's bones is the first of its kind. There is no longer any doubt that prehistoric man hunted mammoths on this continent.

Dr. de Terra holds that archaeologists are now in a position to determine when man appeared on this continent. He relies partly on the ingenious method of determining ages by measuring the radioactivity of such isotopes as radioactive carbon 14—a method developed by Drs. W. F. Libby and James Arnold of the University of Chicago. Radioactive carbon 14 has a half-life of about 5,000 years, meaning that half of its radioactivity is spent in that time. Carbon is present in all organic material. It is not difficult to determine the age of ancient and prehistoric organic remains by measuring the radioactivity of any carbon 14 that they may contain. In this way Dr. Libby has been able to carry the archaeologist back 30,000 years.

The few radio carbon dates that Dr. de Terra helped to fix for various archaeological sites in Mexico indicated that the first farmers and the first artists appeared at least 3,400 years ago in the Valley of Mexico and that the old lake and its happy hunting grounds must be at least 11,200 years old, so the human bones Dr. de Terra found may be 12,000 years old.

ANCIENT SCIENCE

Several years ago Dr. Otto Neugebauer of Brown University, known the world over as an authority on ancient mathematics, gave a course of six lectures at Cornell on "The Exact Sciences in Antiquity." These are now published in book form by the Princeton University Press. The main emphasis is on mathematics and astronomy in Babylonia and Egypt in

their relationship to the Hellenistic period that followed Alexander's conquest of Egypt.

Neugebauer goes into the history of ancient science so simply and so deftly that any well-educated reader can understand him. Here we are concerned simply with some fixed ideas that Dr. Neugebauer shatters.

First comes the idea that the Babylonians were generally committed to an arithmetical system based on the number 60. More than one system was used. There is even a decimal system with signs for 1, 10 and 100.

The Babylonians knew much about algebra, even "actually experimented with special cases of logarithms." Geometry was of less importance than algebra because, as Neugebauer explains, Babylonians measured areas by a process much like that used to divide a sum of money into equal parts.

Magic, number mysticism and astrology are supposed to have shaped Babylonian science. This is a literary cliché that scholars abandoned twenty years ago, says Neugebauer. Mathematical theory played the major role in Babylonian astronomy. Observations were not as accurate as many still suppose. Hellenistic astrologers built up the myth of Babylonian, astronomical competence.

Another idea that Neugebauer shatters is the static character of Egyptian civilization. Egyptians were no more fixed in their ways than other ancient peoples. Neugebauer also points out how erroneous is the belief that mathematics and astronomy played a highly important role in the life of the average ancient Egyptian. Elementary household arithmetic served most purposes. Astronomy was important because of its philosophical influence. It was only an auxiliary tool at best and of practical importance only in making and mounting sundials and in pursuing mathematical geography. In fact, astronomy was crude until the Hellenistic age dawned.

Dr. Neugebauer has nothing but praise for the Egyptian calendar, "the only intelligent calendar which ever existed in human history." Calendars suggest astronomy, but the Egyptian calendar of twelve months of thirty days each and five additional days at the end of each year had its origin in the needs of agricultural life. Hellenistic astronomers made the most of the Egyptian calendar. It was used even by Copernicus.

Neugebauer finds that Egyptian mathematics was essentially "additive." Multiplication and division were used to break up a higher multiple into a sum of consecutive duplications. He points out that our computing machines apply this same principle.

Plato is overrated as a mathematician. He just talked about mathematics and contributed nothing to it. This is about what we would expect of one who preferred speculation to practical demonstration and observation.

This does not mean that Neugebauer has a low opinion of Greek science and mathematics. He never underrates them. But he is careful to sift myth from fact. Indeed, he pays tribute even to astrology because "it is not only one of the significant phenomena of the Hellenistic world but an exceedingly helpful tool for the investigation of the transmission of Hellenistic thought."

Literary Appraisals

RETABLOS DE MEXICO: MEXICAN VOTIVE PAINTINGS, by Roberto Montenegro. English translations by Irene Nicholson. Mexico City, Ediciones Mexicanas, 1950. 15 p. text, 75 illus.

FOR WRITERS, Mexican art seems to be an inexhaustible gold mine. In addition to the works in Spanish that appear almost constantly in Mexico, books and catalogues on the subject in English and other languages are surprisingly frequent. Two books studying different aspects of art in Mexico recently appeared within a few months of each other. The first, published in Mexico in Spanish, with a parallel English text, is an interesting contribution to knowledge of popular religious painting. The second is one more book on the contemporary painters and sculptors and carries only the original English text.

For years the painter Roberto Montenegro has given much attention to the study and classification of popular arts in Mexico. In "Retablos de México": "Mexican Votive Paintings," he presents a very careful selection of these works, known in Mexico as retablos. Through them, for more than two centuries, anonymous painters have been telling with fresh and ingenious charm the stories of exceptional happenings that moved their patrons to have them made as an offering to the saint who worked the miracle.

In the earlier stages of man's culture, art always served for this act of human gratitude toward the divine. And the best of Flemish and Italian painting contains thousands of retablos, in which the painter narrates a biblical event or the martyrdom of some saint. However, they seldom refer to the particular act for which thanks is given, except to portray incidentally the person who commissioned the painting. Spanish paintings, more intensely realistic—and even more individualistic than realistic—probably was responsible for passing on to Mexico, Central America, and the South American highlands the tradition of graphic narration of a private miracle, of a situation in which divine intervention forestalled calamity.

Unquestionably, this tradition developed more vigorously and extensively in Mexico than in any other part of America. Montenegro's volume includes some examples from the eighteenth century and many from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, chosen from public and private collections. He includes only examples of real artistic importance that tell stories with a rich popular flavor, chosen with the keen eye of a painter. When the graphic presentation is not so intense, it is compensated for by a delightfully candid text that is a direct and spontaneous expression of the people.

Take, for example, the one that Francisco Mejía dedicated to Our Lady of Solitude in 1888 for having suddenly cured his wife Vicenta García, who had gone insane. Then there is one dating from October 1760 that tells of the accident that befell the child Miguel Joseph de Vallexo, who was run over by a coach. The painter captures the movement and dramatic impact of the scene with true skill. An unusual case is that of Manuel Rojel, who was apprehended by a band of soldiers in 1858 and, after being shot and wounded by bayonets, commended himself to the mercies of the Virgin and was healed.

In the same category of miracles performed under warlike conditions, we find a more recent one in which Pedro Cruces, a deserter from a Revolutionary cavalry regiment in 1913, tells how he was cap-

tured by "the men from the twelfth infantry, led by General Martín Triana, and when they put me before the firing squad and fired I entrusted myself to the Most Holy Virgin of Guadalupe, Mother of the Mexicans, and when they all left me for dead I rose alive at dawn. She performed the miracle because she so willed, and I also fulfill my promise, because I am a man of my word. Second Captain Pedro Cruces."

Thus we see a parade of a little political history and a good deal of clinical history, ranging from falls from scaffolds to intestinal infections, typhus, and operations for gall stones. But the basic element we see in these simple and delightful tales is the pious spirit of a people that knows how to put art at the service of its beliefs and its ideals. This has been a primary factor in making Mexican art survive through the centuries with exceptional strength.

In a brief prologue that constitutes the only technical text in the book, the author speaks of the poetic and magical feeling of these primitive artisans of painting. But he does not venture to formulate a stylistic or historical scheme to assist possible further investigation of this rich spring of tradition. The book limits itself to tempting the studious reader, through reproductions that are not always clear, to analyze for himself these expressions of the most legitimate folklore.

J. G. S.

THE LONG RUN. By J. Bigelow Clark. 309 pp. New York: Coward McCann.

THE hero of this book of tough adventure in Mexico is amoral, resourceful and hard-boiled—a man of wry humor and violent temper, nasty in saloons, often surly, always blunt, and as likable a character as ever you will meet. Bill Taggart reminds you a little of Prewitt, the sentimental bugler of James Jones' book, and a little of Hollywood. From the first page, doom is camped on his back like the Old Man of the Sea.

Taggart, falsely accused of murdering a Negro in Georgia, is jailed and systematically whopped by the local police. He escapes, murdering his chief tormentor in the process, and flies to Mexico. In an uninquisitive area of that lush land he is for a time safe; but he has a knack for manufacturing trouble that can't be beat.

He makes an enemy of the American consul in a seacoast town and an enemy of the consul's lady friend, a paranoid-type, humorless woman named Harriet. Part of Harriet's hate for Taggart is due to her awareness of his restrained passion for Jane, her brother's wife. Jane and her husband are good people, Taggart observes; Harriet is their vicious persecutor, and Taggart, in his good-natured, terrifying way, decides to help them. He postpones his quest for money for his departure and takes on this, and another, job of Taggartian justice.

There is more than a hint of plot-determination in "The Long Run," but the author's gift for stark and moving dialogue, his character-sketching, his humorous touches, and his descriptions of natural beauties and manmade squalor lead you to feel that the book is not only a classic in the field of derring-do in exotic places but stands high in any company. You should read it.

R. L.

MADE IN MEXICO: The Story of a Country's Arts and Crafts. By Patricia Fent Ross. Illustrated from photographs and with drawings by Carlos Merida. 329 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

UDERLYING all the volumes in the "Made in—" series runs the basic theme that understanding of the people of any country comes in part from knowing how they live and what they make. That theme is brilliantly stated in Mrs. Ross' "Made in Mexico" which replaces Susan Smith's charming little book of the same title, now out of print. This book is intended for an older age-group and is much fuller in treatment than was that earlier study.

The author, an instructor in the Department of Anthropology at Mexico City College, discusses the fine and the popular arts of Mexico, from the awesome pre-Columbian pyramids to the straw and pottery toys of today, from sculpture to cookery, even including chapters on literature, medicine and religion. Not only does she trace their origins and traditions but she gives further perspective by relating them to parallel developments in the great stream of civilization. Her emphasis upon both the Indian's tribal traditions and his artistic individuality is particularly illuminating. Wide in range, precise and colorful in detail, this is an exciting book for any young person interested in the arts, and it should prove helpful as an introduction for adults, too.

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PROMISED LAND. By Joan Lowell. Illustrated by Barbara Corrigan. 213 pp. New York and Boston: Duell, Sloan & Pearce and Little, Brown & Co.

TO that miniscule band of hardy travelers fortunate enough to have heard Joan Lowell tell the almost incredible tale of how she and her husband pioneered a road into the heartland of Brazil's Goiaz state, her book about that adventure comes as a disappointment. This is a pity, since few modern women have a more superlative story of success-crowned adventure to tell.

This amazing pioneering episode in Miss Lowell's life began, romantically enough, during a South American cruise in 1935. She fell in love with the ship's captain, and he with her. To prove herself a worthy "mate" to doughty Captain Bowen, she lived a year on a remote beach, south of the coffee port of Santos, waiting for him to come and get her. (He never did. She had to go back to the States, where they were married.)

Then they went to Brazil together, with little capital and slim prospect of ever earning much more—until they were offered a job. This task was to chop and hew, with what labor they could find, a one hundred-mile road into the backlands state of Goiaz. The reward on completion of the road, some three years later, was land—thousands of acres of land that is now, a decade after their arrival in Brazil, produ-

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"To the south and west from the mountain ridge we could see our frontier. Hundreds of miles of hardwood forest covering rich red earth *** we stood thrilled, gazing at it."

* * *

A natural-born story teller, Miss Lowell has not always in the past kept that gift within bounds of strict accuracy. Those who remember her successful (but controversial) book, "The Cradle of the Deep" may wonder if she is not leaning backward here to escape the charge of writing fiction. The sobriety with which she tells this story suggests that she has tried hard to stick to the facts. This, however, has had its cost. Although a new mellowness has enhanced her reporting (especially in her gentle comprehension of the Brazilian temperament), her over-scrupulousness has stifled the writing talent that made

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"Cradle" such rollicking reading. Since her book is also pedantic and occasionally mawkish in the telling, it may prove somewhat dull to those who have not traveled over the dusty, red road that Miss Lowell helped to build.

W. W. W.

SOUTHWEST. By John Houghton Allen. Illustrated by Paul Leune. 220 pp. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.

Y ANKEE Gen. Phil Sheridan is famous in the Lone Star State for his blunt assertion that if he owned hell and Texas he would sell the latter and dwell in the former. In this volume of exciting Mexican border tales, John Houghton Allen, a Texas native, is more bitter than Sheridan.

He writes of the tortuous brush and prickly pear world that lies in the sun north of the Rio Grande between Laredo and the Gulf of Mexico. Sad because the men and the land of today don't measure up to the glories of boyhood memories, the author sees the region as a brutal country, a dead world in which the people have gone sour. Even the oil wells don't help. Allen, though born to 60,000 Texas acres, has escaped to California, and he contends that the bearable way to see the Southwest is through the bottom of a glass. But the brooding is mostly a process of kneading fine yarns from a memory of heroic days.

Allen is an artist and poet. By the time he was 20 years old, he was studying art in Paris, but much of his youth was spent with strong, dark men wrestling tough cattle in mesquite and cactus. Around

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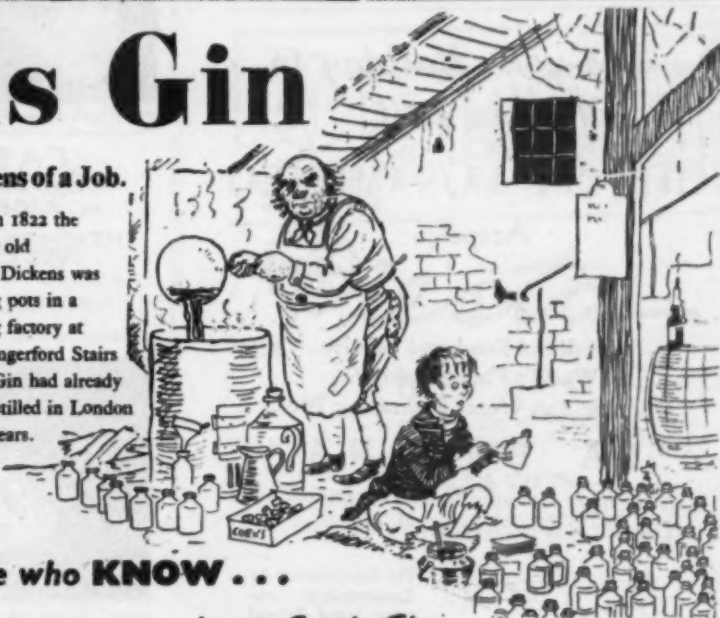
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camp fires deep in the brush he heard tales from old men and young adventurers. He has retold the stories—of bold vaqueros, of revolutionaries, of alluring señoritas, of hot blood and honor—in poetic prose that captures and holds the mood and intensity of the border and its pastoral people.

There's a story of the author's great-uncle who fought in the lost cause of the Confederacy and fled across the border and joined up with the lost cause of Maximilian. There's one about Little Blood, the cold, ruthless right-hand man of Pancho Villa. Here, too, are sketches of frontier soldiers of fortune, of adventures in the bull-ring at Nuevo Laredo, of life at a cavalry post, of a cowhand's sunbitten routine on the open range.

The fifteen tales are linked together by the author's role as brooding minstrel and some fine licks of contrasting the violent past and the soft present. This is not a routine fare of blood and thunder but a collection of artistically drawn sketches of border Mexicans, with a background of Spanish blood and Spanish music. Allen knows Mexicans and he has drawn their character with revealing clarity. One wonders why such an excellent story-teller waited until his forty-third year to write his first book.

L. N.

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Current Attractions

"THE COLOR OF OUR SKIN"

SINCE the old Teatro Colón, one of the few surviving landmarks of the gay Porfirian era, reopened its doors as a dramatic playhouse some months ago, its progress—agreedably surprising to such time-hardened sceptics as myself—has been marked both by material and artistic success. Obviously, this success must be attributed to the three indispensable elements of theatrical enterprise—i. e., good plays, capable actors, and a responsive audience. That is to say, the combination of the first two elements produced as a logical result commensurate public support.

And that leads us to the optimistic conclusion that our dramatic stage, after long years of inanition, is undergoing an actual revival, that Mexico is at last evolving a valid native stage. What indeed can be a more convincing augury than the fact that quite a large number of people are disposed nowadays to pay their admission even to such an ancient and melancholy auditorium as the Teatro Colón in order to enjoy a good play? And is it not reasonable to assume that public response will be even more widespread when the various dramatic playhouses which are now being built in this city are open for business?

We will soon have several adequate playhouses, and that will undoubtedly prove a great help. But what is even more important: we already have a public, a considerable number of thoroughly capable actors, and at least three or four authors who can write satisfactory plays for an adult audience, who are not afraid to deal truthfully and realistically with Mexican themes, and who seem to have a clear notion

of what a Mexican theatre should be. It is, in fact, due to the efforts of these counted few playwrights, who have the courage to defy outworn custom and discard moth-eaten traditions, that an authentic Mexican theatre is being created.

By Vane C. Dalton

Although each of the various plays produced in recent months at the Teatro Colón deserves praise, I believe that the current play at this theatre, "El Color de Nuestra Piel," ("The Color of our Skin") by Celestino Gorostiza, is not only the finest of them all but is one of the finest plays by a Mexican author I have seen to date. Here is a play developed with excellent craft, entirely convincing in characterization and plot, which fearlessly unwinds a theme of widest social significance, a quotidian theme wherein nearly every living Mexican could take a part.

In "The Color of our Skin" Sr. Gorostiza approaches an almost forbidden realm—that of the peculiar native manifestation of race-prejudice, of the psychological and social effects of biological causes, of the specific character traits stemming from the racial amalgam which comprises the Mexican folk. The essence of the theme is the profound effect the respective shade of the skin exerts on individual character and existence, and the inhibitions and complexes which belabor some middleclass Mexicans of mixed bloods. In its broader implications, the play tends

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to demonstrate that the conflict between the criollo (pure white Mexican) and the mestizo and Indian, which generated the almost incessant civil strife through the first fifty years of Mexican independence, and which apparently came to an end with Benito Juarez and the Reform, in a subtler manner continues to this day and fundamentally affects the individual and collective life of the Mexicans.

A white skin, blond hair and blue eyes, as Gorostiza points out, still define social superiority in our middleclass midst, and the "guerrito" is nearly always the pampered member of the household. Every mestizo parent guards the secret longing that his or her children may, through some atavistic throwback, turn out to be of fair complexion. And, as this play brings out, such longings may at times reach truly disastrous extremes.

The story of "El Color de Nuestra Piel" involves an average and in many respects typical Mexican middleclass family. The father is a quite respectable businessman, a bank official and part-owner of a pharmaceutical laboratory, who worked himself up from very modest beginnings. Obviously a mestizo, he is nevertheless very proud of the pure criollo features traced in his grandfather's portrait which adorns the livingroom wall. And he is also very proud of the conspicuous blondness of his younger son.

In addition to the fair-skinned son there is a brother and a sister whose complexions, like that of their father and mother, are of a mestizo shade. It is, however, a source of satisfaction for the parents that their daughter is engaged to marry a young man of superior social position and a family of pure criollo stock. Their contentment is marred on the eve of the wedding by the wayward conduct of their two sons. The elder, a fatuous dandy and spendthrift, has just finished squandering two hundred thousand pesos of his father's money on a harebrained project to produce motion pictures which never emerged from its conversational stage. The fair-skinned younger brother, impudent, perceptive, with a premature talent for pet-

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ty and shady manipulations, finally perpetrates a job that brings disgrace and ruin to the family. Thus, in the midst of this havoc, the complete story is brought to light.

The pet blond child of the family—who resorts to suicide in the end—turns out to be the product of adultery committed by his mother with her husband's business partner and lifelong friend—a foreigner of undivided nationality whom, from his name of Zeyer, we take to be a German. It seems that she had yielded to this aberration not so much because of love but because she was prompted by her longings to bear a fair-skinned child.

The denouement brings forth its implicit moral. The daughter, whose engagement had been broken off by the aristocratic fiancé as result of the scandal, perceives that she had been erroneously guided by ambition and pride rather than veritable affinity or affection, and discovers that she is actually in love with a thoroughly honorable, competent and in every way desirable young man, chief chemist in her father's laboratory, of a decidedly dark complexion, who, incidentally, discloses that he is the son of an Indian servant woman and an unknown father—the master of a household where she had been employed.

Gorostiza wrote a very good, a highly challenging and significant play, which received full justice from the cast of excellent performers, headed by Isabela Corona, Clara Martínez, Miguel Ángel Ferriz and Fernando Mendoza.



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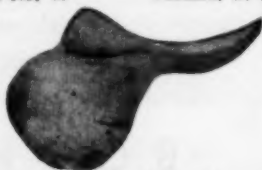
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Art and Personal Notes

AN exposition of works by the noted Mexican painter Ramon Alva de la Canal is being offered at this time by the Libreria Juarez (Avenida Juarez No. 102). Alva de la Canal was one of the leading pioneers in the development of modern mural art in Mexico, having painted his first mural, titled "The Conquest," in the vestibule of the old Colegio de San Ildefonso building in 1922.

In 1929 he decorated the interior of the gigantic monument to Morelos—the work of Guillermo Ruiz—on the Island of Janitzio in Michoacan, developing the story of the great patriot in a series of fifty and some odd panels. In 1946 he executed a group of impressive murals on the subjects of war, peace and humanity, in the building of the Naval Shops in the Lomas de Chapultepec.

For the present exhibition the artist gathered fifty-seven paintings in oil, water color and pastel, a group of drawings and a collection of photographs of his murals.

THE National Library (Corner Isabel la Catolica and Avenida Uruguay) is showing at this time paintings by the young and promising local artist Carlos Aleibiades Merida. The show is given under the auspices of the National University of Mexico.

THE Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute (Calle de Panuco No. 10) is presenting an exhibition of paintings and drawings by the Jamaican artist Parboo Singh who for some time past has been working in Mexico.

ALARGE and unusually interesting collection of paintings in oil, tempera and water color, as well as some drawings and prints, by the distinguished artist Angelina Beloff, may be seen at the Galeria de Arte Mexicano (Calle de Milan No. 18).

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SALON de la Plastica Mexicana (Calle de Puebla No. 154) is exhibiting during this month a varied collection of works by the following contemporary Mexican painters: Rufino Tamayo, Carlos Orozco Romero, Ricardo Martinez, Guillermo Meza, Federico Cantú, Luis Nishizawa, Feliciano Peña and José Chávez Morado.

PRINTS on Mexican themes by the gifted Belgian artist Suzanne Daco comprise the very interesting current exhibit at the Galeria Arte Moderno (Plaza Santos Degollado No. 16 C).

Jointly with this exhibit, this gallery is showing a group of recent paintings in oil by Mariano Paredes.

PORTRAITS, landscapes and still life in oil, carefully drawn and smoothly painted, the work of Alfredo Guizar, were offered last month by the Círculo de Bellas Artes de Mexico (Avenida Juárez No. 58). Following this exhibit, this gallery is presenting a group of paintings on a variety of themes, likewise of a conventional stamp, by Pablo Almela.

THE Mexican-North American Cultural Institute (Avenida Yucatan No. 63) is sponsoring an exhibition of photographs taken in Mexico by Edwin Boyd Johnson.

Previous to the last World War, Mr. Johnson was a painter, graduate of the Chicago Art Institute and student at the National Academy of Design in New York, Ecole de la Grande Chaumier in Paris, and the Kunstgewerbeschule in Vienna. As a mural artist he decorated various United States Post Office buildings, schools, hospitals and other public edifices.

During the war, he served three and a half years in the Navy in the South Pacific, and it was during



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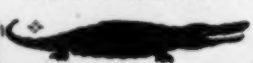
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that time that he became interested in the art possibilities of photography. Near the end of the war, he was given the opportunity to photograph a series of subjects for the U.S. Navy and the Military Government of Okinawa.

The photographs Mr. Johnson presents in his current show reveal an imaginative approach to Mexican sights and a high technical skill.

Patterns of an Old City . . .

Continued from page 20

He ate his mid-day meal in one of the cheap restaurants in the vicinity of the post office, and his supper, again consisting of coffee and rolls, in his flat. Once a week he allowed himself the luxury of a picture show in one of the cheaper neighborhood theatres, and upon much rarer occasions of a glass of beer in a corner cantina. His evenings he usually spent sitting in his flat pursuing the columns of an afternoon paper, reading it entirely from the first to last page, including even the advertising. Thus, beyond the inevitable and superficial associations at his work, the newspaper was his sole contact with reality. In his total withdrawal it yet enabled him to vicariously participate in the life around him.

Poor in worldly goods and poor in spirit, Saldívar enjoyed the rare privilege of complete serenity, of freedom from unrest and yearnings. Life had become with him an unalterable sequence; it had assumed a definitive pattern. It was a tranquil immutable process instinctively shielded from any disruption of change. Years back, of course, there had been a period of youthful unrest. There had been no fixed or driving ambition, but there were yet the normal cravings for fulfillment—a woman's love, children, a home, possessions—vague cravings which were gradually quelled and effaced by repeated minor frustrations, obliterated in a final acquiescence.

At forty-seven Saldívar had safely outlived his flight and achieved his perfect refuge from a reality which he could never fully comprehend or cope with. He had found his peace and safety in treading along a fixed quotidian rut without the slightest urge for deviation. And now this refuge had been suddenly invaded and his peace imperiled by the intrusion of the man who sat on his bed staring at him wildly with seething chaos in his eyes—the intrusion of devastating torment, of an ultimate reality from which neither could escape.

And at last, in answer to Saldívar's repeated query, "What made you do it?" the man seemed able to form and utter words, at last he could talk if only to express his inner chaos.

"I could not make her stop. She went on shouting. Went on saying things. Ugly words. I pled with her to stop. . . I reasoned. . . I begged her. . . But she went on shouting ugly words. . . saying things that cut me like a knife.

"I came back to her. Came back after a long time to find her. Four years. Bracero. Laboring in the United States. They allowed me six months. But I walked off when the time was up and lost myself and stayed on. Picking cotton in Texas. Working beets in Colorado. Digging ditches in Kansas. I stayed on. I ran away from her, and I came back because. . . because I thought I could not do without her. Four years. Always bore her inside. Loneliness. Nothing there. I left my woman, my two children, to run away. . ."

"Her children?" Saldívar asked.

"No. My children. My wife and my children in Colima. I left them to go away with her. Long ago. We came here to the city. And it was all right for a time. We got along. Then it got spoiled. It was no good. I did not go back to my woman in Colima. Lost that. No place to go back. So I went away as bracero. I went away, but she was always with me. No women there for a man like me. Thought I would forget. But she was always with me.

"So I came back. Went everywhere looking for her, days and days, till I found her. She was glad I came back. It seemed all right. I brought some money with me. We forgot the past and made a new start. I found work. It seemed all right."

The man's talk was less labored now. In striving to recall and narrate the past, he seemed to be emerging from the chaos. His thoughts were assuming coherence. "Yes. We were getting along for a time. So long as it was new and we lived for the present. So long as we kept the time we had been parted out of our minds. The four years I had been away. But it caught up with us. We could not erase those years. We were both jealous of the time we had been apart. It came up between us like a . . . like a black cloud. We kept our suspicions hidden. But they were always there. How did you live? Who were you with? What really went on in that time? There was no reason for it. I lost her; I gave her up when I went away, and now we were again together, and that was enough. But she could never forgive me for having abandoned her, nor could I rid my mind of these questions. They would come up of a sudden and spoil everything. What difference does it make? I asked myself. You cannot undo things. You had her, and then you did not want her any more, and then you found out that you had always wanted her and you came back and she took you in. But in having come back she became the stronger. You admitted to her that she won and you gave her the upper hand. You see—a man cannot give a woman the upper hand. When he does he is lost. He is not himself any more. He does not own himself any more, and he is no longer free."

As the man talked on he seemed to be gaining calm, freeing himself of the turmoil. He now spoke almost with normal ease, fluidly, halting only to clear up a thought, driven by an eagerness to tell everything, to rid himself of it, to tell the whole story that would explain his deed. The pallor of dawn sieved into the room and yet the man talked on.

And as he listened, Saldivar, plunged into a stark reality he had never known, torn away from his detachment and rendered not merely a witness but a participant in a devastating tragedy, likewise emerged from the chaos. What he beheld hurled him out of his inertia; it gave him a feeling of throbbing life he had never known; it lifted him out of emotional death.

"So tonight," the man continued, "it was like many other nights. We were quarreling, and I could not make her stop reviling me, and the more I tried the uglier she got. I went on telling her to shut up, but she kept it up. Then my patience was gone. I grasped her and threw her on the bed, and put my hand over her mouth to make her stop; but she bit my hand, and I clasped her throat with the other hand and pressed hard, saying 'shut up, shut up, shut up,' pressing harder all the time, not knowing what I was doing, feeling nothing in me but the need to make her shut up, and when I released her I saw what I had done."

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It was daylight when Saldivar finally rose from his chair and commenced putting on his clothes. Now everything was clear. He sensed a strange new calm, almost an elation, for life had brought to him its first great trial and he had been able to face it and solve it.

They left the flat a few minutes later and walked through the bedraggled tenement court and down the street, walking all the way in silence, save for the man's murmured words when they reached the doors of the nearest police station: "It is good of you to be helping me now, bringing me here. Maybe I would not be able to do it myself."

Each paced firmly as they went inside.

The Mayas and Their Architecture . . .

Continued from page 21

in India and, through the Moors, eventually found its way to Europe and to us. And while dark rumors were being spread about the streets of the "Eternal City" that it was Nero who had set fire to the place and that he "played his fiddle" while watching the conflagration, the people of Uaxactun (pronounced Wah-shacktoon'), in what is now Guatemala, were carving dates of astronomical import on tablets of jade.

Soon rivaling that city in importance were Copan in Honduras, Palenque in the Mexican state of Chiapas, and Tikal and Quirigua, both in Guatemala. This period of culture has long been spoken of as the Old Empire, a designation somewhat confusing both as to time and type, for Yucatan, center of the "New Empire," was occupied during that same early period, though only as a provincial region. Dr. Sylvanus G. Morley, noted authority on the Mayas, clarifies the implied political confusion by describing the Old Empire as "probably not so much a political entity as a cultural unit, like the ancient city-states of Greece, Athens, Sparta, and Corinth, or the city-states of Italy in the Renaissance, Venice, Genoa, and Florence." These cities were, therefore, a rather loosely associated group of communities, separately governed, but enjoying a culture common to them all.

For several centuries they flourished. In the beginning, the ancestors of the builders of these cities had come down from the north—from the gulf coast and from the plateau of Mexico. Perhaps some of them were descendants of the builders of Cuicuilco. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions may have been the cause of their move southward. Others probably moved down from the shores of the gulf, where the recent discoveries indicate occupation at a date earlier than any yet known farther south. Passing through the bottleneck of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, many tribes must have been brought together to fuse into that civilization which already had an amazing calendar when first we hear of them.

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Then sometime during the eighth century they stopped building temples and palaces. Gradually they moved out and northward to the peninsula of Yucatán, leaving their cities of stone and their cultivated fields to be choked by the jungle. Why? Civil war, disease, earthquakes, climatic changes, famine are reasons which have been suggested. The gradual exhaustion of the soil is believed by some authorities to have been the major reason; and it seems the most plausible explanation. Thus, if the last was the case, it was agriculture that had made possible those magnificent cities, and it was the eventual failure of agriculture there that caused them to be abandoned.

The country in which these cities had been built lies far beyond that barrier which literally cuts Mexico in half, in a lowland overgrown with dense tropical forest. To plant the crops it was necessary to clear a patch of forest by felling and burning the trees. Even then it was necessary to battle with the weeds which grew as rapidly as the maize; and after two or three seasons a field was abandoned in favor of clearing another patch of forest. This meant an everwidening circle of clearings for the milpas (cornfields), getting ever farther away from the ceremonial centers. After continuous repetition, even the forests would not grow again and the one-time jungle, cleared for cornfields, had to be abandoned to the grass which was all the soil would support. The amazing thing is that the Mayas, in that unfavorable country, were as persistent as they were in their agricultural pursuits, their consequent architecture, and their magnificent cities.

The land to which they moved is a flat limestone plain, a recent coral peninsula not unlike Florida, covered with a dense low forest. Quite unlike the country of the Rubber People, there are no rivers, and but few lakes. The chief sources of water are large natural wells known as cenotes, where the surface limestone has broken through to a subterranean water level.

Beside these cenotes the cities had been built, in order that the inhabitants might have an assured supply of water. The most famous of these cities had two such wells, each about 200 feet in diameter, so that in addition to an ample water supply there was a well left over which was later held sacred and used only for ceremonial purposes. Because of these wells, the tribe, known as the Itzá, which settled there named their city Chichen Itzá, which means "Mouths of the Wells of the Itzá."

The people migrating from the south settled in those watered places already inhabited as provincial outposts during the earlier period of culture. Although their recovery in northern Yucatán at first was slow, the new blood brought a new energy which, by the latter half of the tenth century, resulted in a renaissance of the arts, and great new cities began to blossom forth to take the place of the earlier outposts.

In the early part of the eleventh century the three most important city-states of northern Yucatán, Chichen Itzá, Uxmal, and Mayapán, formed an alliance called the League of Mayapán, and there followed almost two centuries of peace and a continued revival of the arts.

Eventually, however, quarrels among these city-states resulted in bringing in foreign allies from the highlands of Central Mexico. These foreigners are thought to have been Toltecs, and their influence as they ultimately succeeded to power is clearly evident.

The architecture of the Mayas was dominantly religious. Their religious philosophy, in which the pow-

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ers of nature played such an important part in their daily life—in fact, in their very possibility of life—led to the adoption of ceremonies and is responsible for the overwhelming importance of the ceremonial architecture and the planning of great architectural complexes devoted to that end. Especially during the period of the Old Empire, the Mayas show a keen conception of the value and beauty of architectural order in the arrangement of their buildings. All of the important cities of that earlier period reveal carefully planned religious centers and in many instances plots of ground which had been carefully graded before construction was begun. Copan in Honduras is a particularly fine example.

These cities were not citadels (almost no signs of fortifications have been found), and because of their emphasis as ceremonial centers, residential architecture took a decidedly second place. The dwellings of the people, forming a fringe around the ceremonial center, were simple huts of adobe or wattle and adobe, with roofs of thatch.

The typical city of that period was built around a great plaza or square, at one end of which a large terraced mound served as a base for temples, each on a pyramidal substructure of its own. In addition to the temples were palaces for the rulers, monasteries for the priests, nunneries for the temple maidens, and astronomical observatories, all built of stone, covered with a thick layer of stucco, and painted in brilliant colors.

In the plaza stood beautifully sculptured monoliths (stelae), some of them as high as twenty-five feet, carved with figures of priests and warriors and covered with religious symbols. These monuments had a definite calendrical as well as religious significance, having been erected at periodic intervals (usually ten years) to commemorate the principal events of the previous decade.


During the first centuries of the New Empire in Yucatán the architecture seems to have continued on the principles of the earlier period, although some differences had begun to be evident. There were similar civic centers and similar temples built on pyramidal bases, but less attention was paid to formal grouping

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of buildings and more to architectural sculpture in stone. Though the ruins of cities of the Old Empire show evidences of fine pyramids and temples and a keen conception of the art of city planning, it was in sculpture as an independent art that the artists had found their greatest expression; and it was not until the cities of Yucatán were developed that sculpture became such an important part of architecture. The stone facades of the New Empire buildings, instead of being covered with a thick layer of stucco to form a smooth surface for painted decoration, were richly sculptured in geometric patterns sprinkled with religious symbols painted in bright colors.

As during the earlier period, there were two principal kinds of buildings—temples and palaces. The stone temples were usually placed upon the top of truncated pyramids built as solid masses of earth and rubble faced with stone. The pyramids were usually square, rising in a series of steps or terraces of varying number, and with a broad stairway for approach to the temple on top. Some of the larger pyramids had stairways on all four faces. The temples which crowned the truncated pyramids sometimes had but one narrow, vaulted room; sometimes there were two, with a thick masonry wall between, in which case the outer one, with several doorways served as a portico and the inner one served as a sanctuary. The so-called "palaces" were usually built on low platforms and were simply groups of rooms, often irregularly placed, and were probably occupied by the rulers and the priests.

Structural characteristics, which mean also structural limitations, remained the same, as indeed they did throughout all of the ancient American civilizations. The Mayas had two methods of roofing spaces. One was the simplest form of construction, the wooden beam, or lintel, most of which have deteriorated with weather and time to such an extent that the stones they were intended to support have fallen in ruins. Wood lintels were often employed over doorway, in both palaces and temples; while the palaces were prob-

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ably roofed by means of wood beams, though none have remained intact. The other roofing method, commonly employed in temples, was a kind of false arch of stone, built at a steep angle.

Herein lies one of the inexplicable weaknesses of Maya knowledge and ability, seemingly inconsistent with their advances in other lines, which has puzzled scientists for a long time. Whereas, in mathematical and especially in astronomical calculations they were far in advance of the Romans and the medievalists of Europe; and in architectural decoration they were their equals, if not their superiors; in construction—in the knowledge and application of structural principles—they were far behind their European contemporaries. While the Romans and later Europeans were building great arched structures and great vaulted ceilings, the Mayas depended on the rather weak and inefficient "false arch" for covering spaces with masonry.

* * *

The builders obviously did not understand the principle of the true arch with a keystone, which permits a fairly wide span. Nor was the corbelled arch, in which each stone transfers its load to and projects slightly beyond the one on which it rests, commonly employed by the Mayas, as is often supposed. Their method of "false arch" construction has frequently been incorrectly described as extending the walls inward until they were close enough together to bridge with a capstone. Such a corbelled construction, though possibly known by the Mayas, is not evidenced by cross

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sections of arches and vaults still standing. Existing remains indicate that a form, or centering, probably of wood, must have been used to hold the stones in place temporarily, and that the facing of the arch, or vault, was merely a cut-stone veneer. The individual stones were left rough hewn and pointed on the inside; and the bottom faces were not even leveled off to rest upon the stone beneath, in order to form the cantilever necessary in corbelled construction. It was the adhesion to the mortar and rubble filled in as a backing, resulting in an essentially monolithic construction, that held the mass in place. This method of construction decidedly limited the span of the vault, necessitated walls of great thickness, and resulted in narrow interiors.

The use of the false arch, which was built at a steep angle, and the resulting height above the exterior openings gave a high entablature which served as an excellent field for the imagination of the sculptor. Every advantage of this was taken, particularly during the New Empire, when a rather complete architectural sculpture took the place of the independent sculptured shafts, or stelae, of the earlier period. In fact, the builders went even further by extending the facade of a temple still higher, decorating it with sculpture in low relief, or sometimes building up a wall or crest sculptured. Sometimes these roof combs were solid; in other cases they were perforated and covered with stucco ornamentation. The aim was an imposing exterior rather than interior space, which, due to the heavy walls, was considerably less than the actual masonry. Including the masonry of the sub-structure, the actual enclosed space was only a very small fraction of the whole. Whatever may have been the mechanical prowess of their possible ancestors in moving huge blocks of stone in the lowlands along the gulf, it is obvious that the ability of the Mayas in structural engineering was decidedly inferior to their skill in decoration.

The earliest temples had but one narrow vaulted room; but as the limited structural skill of the Mayas developed, attempts were made to increase interior space by building two parallel vaulted chambers with

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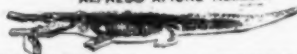


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greater spans to the vaults. The intermediate wall with its bulk of masonry made possible the developed central roof comb, which rested directly thereon rather than depending upon the precarious support of the vault. Walls were reduced in thickness, and as the builders became more daring the number of openings was increased. At first these openings were narrower than the piers of masonry between them, but eventually the openings were made wider and the piers were reduced to the shape of a square in plan, forming an interesting step in the evolution of the column and the colonnade. The most important example of the extreme development of this, in which the temple became a building which could house a congregation, is the Temple of the Warriors at Chichen Itzá. It was not until a late period that round columns came into use.

In some developed examples buildings of more than one story were erected, but in these cases the second or third stories were built over a solid core, or, if added to an existing temple with inner rooms, such inner rooms were filled in before an upper story was built above them. This resulted, of course, in a setback profile in elevation. Such upper rooms naturally admitted more light than inner, lower rooms, but the actual gain in interior space was nil. The chief advantage was a gain in effect. The increased height permitted a greater field for sculpture on the exterior and for carvings and frescoes on the interior walls.

The architect and the sculptor must have worked very closely together; in fact, the massive architecture of the New Empire is almost a form of sculpture. The Maya sculptor covered any given space completely with a wealth of detail, depending upon colors to bring out the design, which was usually highly conventional, filled with religious symbolism. Since the Maya civilization was agricultural, their religion centered on the powers of nature, personified by a great many deities, gods of the earth, the sun, the moon, of wind and rain and thunder and lightning. All of these found places on the buildings in the form of sculpture, and, as interior spaces became larger and brighter, in frescoes.

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The sculptural decoration of the earlier buildings was realistic, including figures of men and animals which display a high degree of anatomical skill, and grotesque faces conceived with great imagination; but at a later date it became increasingly geometric, with a high conventionalization of such forms as serpent masks, until a complicated religious symbolism had practically replaced the direct visual images.

In their sense of design the Maya sculptors were unexcelled. Most of their carving was in low relief, with groupings of interlaced figures and the decorative use of line to fill with symbolism all space which would otherwise be void. Its greatest qualities lie in its feeling of fitness to the space occupied and in its scale and structural character; for in spite of its profusion Maya sculpture always preserved a sound sense of architecture. In perspective the Maya artists were far in advance of the Egyptians and Assyrians, for they could draw or carve the human figure in front view or in profile, or even in three-quarters view, without distortions, and with a masterly handling of delicate contours.

Not only in pure art, but in the application of scientific and mathematical principles to art, the Mayas show a rather amazing advancement. The building of their astronomical observatories in such a way as to obtain accurate lines of sight for their observations is probably the best-known example of their application of science to architecture. But there were others.

In their highly developed artistry, and in their cultural and political development as well, the Mayas have been compared by Dr. Spinden to the Greeks, the more warlike Aztecs to the Romans. From the standpoint of art alone, there is foundation for this comparison in more respects than one. The Mayas developed architecture and sculpture to a high plane, and used bright colors to bring out their architectural sculpture, as did the Greeks, and it has been found that they employed certain refinements usually credited to the Greeks alone, especially those having to do with the correction of optical illusions and the

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employment of optical "tricks" to gain effect. The Greeks made their long horizontal lines, such as the steps of temples, slightly convex to overcome the effect of sag in the middle, which long horizontal lines give; and in their temple inscriptions they made the letters of the upper lines slightly larger than those of the lower so that they would all appear of one size when viewed from below. In these subtleties the Greeks were not in advance of the Mayas. In his survey of the Nunnery at Uxmal, Frans Blom found not only that the same correction was made for the apparent sag of horizontal lines in the steps of the approach, but that the courtyards, instead of being rectangular and horizontal, were built with the side walls closer together at the rear than at the front and with the floor sloping upward toward the rear, a clever use of false perspective to give the impression of greater depth than actually existed. In addition, the carvings of the facade were tilted outward, for better visibility and to take advantage of deeper shadows in bringing out the relief. The importance of the sun and its effect of light and shadow on the architecture and sculpture was apparently as well recognized by the architect and sculptor as its importance in the raising of crops was by the astronomer-priest.

These were the principal scientific, structural, and decorative elements of the architecture of the Old Empire and the early and middle parts of the New Empire. There were variations; but they were variations on the same themes.

But eventually came greater variations, new themes, obviously not just a Maya development, but the result of a foreign influence. Buildings were larger and presented greater variety. This is especially noticeable in Chichen Itzá, best known of the Maya cities. The rival city of Mayapán had brought in allies from the great plateau to help them in their

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war with Chichen Itzá. These allies not only helped to conquer Chichen, but stayed there to rule and add to the glory of its architecture. Extensive excavation and restoration by the Carnegie Institution of Washington has revealed much of its grandeur. The carefully preconceived and orderly arrangement of the newer part of the city, and the buildings in it, the round Caracol, or astronomical observatory, the Castillo, the Ball Court, the Temple of the Jaguars, all show that new influence. True columns appeared, some of them square with the sides covered with carved figures of warriors, and others round and built up of drums—a thousand of them in one temple group at Chichen Itzá. The sculptured ornament had ceased its intricate form of interwoven geometrical and conventional carvings in low relief, and took on a vigorous, more naturalistic treatment. Huge stone serpents invaded the city and stood on their heads to support stone lintels with their tails. Quetzalcóatl, the "Feathered Serpent," of whom we shall learn more, had come to Chichen Itzá and became, translated into Maya, Kukulcan, the patron deity of the city. Not only as columns, but flanking temple stairways and sculptured on cornices, the mark of his influence has been left.

Not only new architecture and sculpture, but new religion, new customs, new ideas, helped to transform the city. Civil war had threatened its destruction. It had become stagnant. Now it had become the leading city of the Mayas and was having a building boom such as it had never had before. And everywhere was the Feathered Serpent, the much-revered god of another tribe. The allies of a rival city had become conquerors. The craftsmanship was still Maya; but there was a new leadership. The Toltecs had come!

Under the stimulus of the new leadership from the great plateau, Chichen Itzá became the mecca of ancient America. From miles around pilgrims came to gaze in wonder at the magnificent buildings, the stone colonnades and richly carved temples; and to witness strange sights and rites—priests in gor-



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geous cloaks of jaguar skins and rich embroideries, adorned with plumes of the quetzal and ornaments of gold and jade; stately processions along the Sacred Causeway; and beautiful maidens thrown into the Sacred Well as an appeal to the gods to bring rain. It was the holy city of the empire. In its regal splendor, in its wealth of great monuments, in its elaborate and colorful ceremonies, it was dazzling.

Then in the middle of the fifteenth century, much as their ancestors had done hundreds of years before, the last of the magnificent Mayas gave up their cities to the jungle and the jaguar and the deer, leaving behind but a remnant of their once proud civilization; gave up their dazzling cities of stone and their pompous and colorful ceremonies, and straggled back to the wilderness to the south, whence they had

Istepec . . .

Continued from page 12

There was still no other room vacant in the hotel, so I prepared to sit up the first part of the night. But Piña did a most self-sacrificing thing. He persuaded a young engineer in Number 6 to occupy his own bed in a private house down the street, so that Myers could have the engineer's room. Piña adamantly refused to accept money for his own night's lodging elsewhere. He was as secretive about the place as he was reassuring about his comfort. As I undressed in the dark, so as not to attract the mosquitoes or the buzzards, I got a clairvoyant vision of the young man stretched out on the Pan-American counter, and I prayed he wouldn't roll off and crack his skull. The next morning he was quite sound, and as cheerful as usual, though he was vague about where or how he had passed the night.

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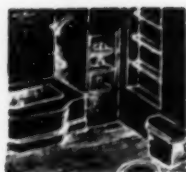
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er had married a daughter of Wilbur Barker. The Guastis were blue-eyed blonds of north-Italian stock. Forty years ago, as their parents were on their way to California they had paused at Salina Cruz for the birthing of the elder. Since business opportunities looked good in the thriving port, their father had decided to remain. Their uncle had gone on to Los Angeles and had become the wine-maker whose trade name of Guasti is known across the continent. Both these Guasti boys had been educated at military school and college in the States, but had returned to the Isthmus and their father's business.

We had just begun our conversation when an Indian girl arrived bearing a tray with cups and saucers and a pot of hot coffee nestling under a padded tea cozy. Every afternoon at half-past three their wives alternately sent coffee. They insisted that we join them and sent the maid back home for more coffee. As the temperature was steaming hot outside, we regarded the idea of hot coffee dubiously. "But," the elder brother said, "It stimulates you so that you forget the heat. And you don't perspire as much as when you drink long drinks."

I recalled that I had drunk coffee on hot afternoons in Brazil and that I had sipped it in the souks of Piskra at the edge of the Sahara with pleasant relief. So I encouraged Myers to fall in. The coffee was black and very strong, and right enough, we immediately felt fortified to endure the blistering sun and the lateness of the four o'clock train.

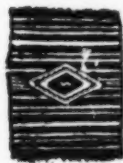
Later that afternoon the spanking-new station wagon of the airline arrived before the door of the airways office. It had just been unloaded at the depot and serviced. "It works fine," said the attendant who had gone to fetch it. "This is something more like," Piña said proudly. "Would you like to christen the car, so to speak, by taking the first ride?"



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I was delighted, though there seemed no place in Ixtepec to drive except the mile length of the one principal street. "Can we go to the river?" I suggested.

"Almost," he said. We turned down a side street, which was bordered with organ cacti, their green pipes bristling with a multitude of silver stilettos. These were the fence walls surrounding the cottages of the poor. Through the gatelike openings we could see women ironing bright-colored garments on ironing-boards set up in the yard.

When the road became indefinable, we left the station wagon and walked to a little promontory with a cluster of trees. Three youths in military uniform were huddled together and peering down obliquely at the river. They looked a bit self-conscious as we approached. Down on the bank a woman was slipping out of her huipil, pulling it over her head. Piña and I stood apart from the soldiers, like another group of elders spying upon Susanna at the bath. Ingeniously the woman slipped her skirt up over her bare torso and gracefully tossed it onto the bank as she stooped under the water. Piña and I strolled down the slope to the lower bank, as if to get a better view of the declining sun, but really to get a better view of the bather without seeming to be interested. The reflection of the flaming disk slashed the surface of the river like a livid lash on a brown back. A lone man appeared some twenty yards beyond us and, sitting on a rock, took off his clothes. He too slid into the water modestlike, with the briefest display of nakedness, and began to swim out to the flame-colored streak. The woman did not swim, but stood up to her breasts in water and laved herself with cupped hands, keeping her back to the shore.

"In the early mornings the river here is full of men and women," Piña said.

"They seem to do it very modestly."

"Oh yes," Piña said. "The men and women bathe in separate groups, but in full sight of each other. All over twelve enter the water in a kind of crouching position, and when they stand up out of the water, both sexes make gestures of hiding them-



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selves with their hands. The men who are long enough hide themselves between their own legs."

As the woman's bath seemed about to terminate, I got my Leica ready. Just as she stood up knee-deep in water and turned to come out, I snapped the picture. Only in the after-moment as she reached for her skirt did I realize how lovely in figure she was. "The Tehuanas, who are always painted in their flowing finery," I said, "are the only women in Mexico—to judge by the hideous squat females of the famous painters—who are worth painting in the raw."

Ma and Junior ..

Continued from page 11

all in neat little piles on the top of the dresser, on the top of the table and all over the floor; all shapes and sizes and each one polished until it glistened. So that was the way they passed their time on the island, Señor, gathering sea-shells! A middle-aged man and an old lady. No, Señor, it didn't make sense. I asked a gringo guest if such a thing was common among gringos and he said it was very uncommon, so uncommon in fact that he was going to investigate himself, as he was interested in people's idiosyncrasies."

"Not long afterwards my gringo friend explained everything satisfactorily. He had somehow become friendly with Ma. It seems that Junior, though fifty years old, was actually only seven years of age, and his only joy in life was gathering sea-shells. So once a year Ma took him to the sea-shore to gather sea-shells. In a month's time they gathered enough sea-shells to keep Junior happy the whole year. Ma, of course, hated sea-shells and everything else about the sea, for that matter, but she had nothing else in life to love except Junior—poor soul."

"But why do you imagine they came clear to Acapulco for sea-shells," I asked. "They should be able to find quite a few around Galveston. That's much closer to where they live."

"Not for twenty pesos a day, Señor. Judging from those neat little piles of shells I saw in her cabin it



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wouldn't surprise me in the least if Ma was an incurable miser."

"Don Antonio," I said, "let's forget Ma and Junior and all the rest of humanity and have another drink. What do you say?"

"Señor, as a hotel man I can never forget humanity and that's one reason I'll have another drink."

Mexico's University City . . .

Continued from page 19

CENTRAL LIBRARY

Housed in a tower-like structure forty meters high, whose four facades are decorated with bas-relief sculptures symbolizing the ancient culture and civilization of Mexico. It includes numerous and spacious reading-rooms.

MEDICAL SCHOOL

Comprises two large buildings, with classrooms, laboratories, and auditorium, and all requisite departments.


OTHER STRUCTURES

In addition to the above enumerated buildings, the University City will include edifices for the Schools of Chemistry, Odontology, and Veterinary Medicine. There will also be an Auditorium, or Magna Lecture Hall, with a capacity for more than four thousand persons, as well as buildings for work-shops, printing plant and general services.


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SPORT ZONE OF EXHIBITIONS

The salient structure in this zone is the great Olympic stadium with, as has been mentioned above, a capacity of 110,000 spectators, one of the largest in the world. 20,000 seats are under a balcony and are therefore in the shade. The stadium boasts the most modern installations for the staging of sports and athletic events, as well as for public convenience.

RESIDENTIAL ZONE FOR STUDENTS

The residential zone for students extends over the southern part of the campus, adjacent to the Sports Practice zone. Its spacious dormitories will house up to 450 students each; three to a room. A restaurant, library, laundry and club rooms have been planned for each dormitory building. It is estimated



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that from a student body of some 26,000 pupils, about 12,000 will be in residence.

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RESIDENTIAL ZONE FOR TEACHERS

This will consist of a large apartment building surrounded by a number of one-family residences, providing sufficient housing for the entire teaching staff and employees of the University. It will have all the services modern life can offer.

CIVIC CENTER

An area extending between the Olympic Stadium and the residential zone for teachers will be reserved for a civic center which will contain a market, sundry shops, auditorium, theatre, and recreation park.

CAPACITY

There is a wide enough zone held in reserve to permit any enlargement that may eventually be considered necessary.

Charro . . .

Continued from page 10

men, women, children, and dogs. "A peso for sun, two for shade," says the ticket seller. "Both made by God."

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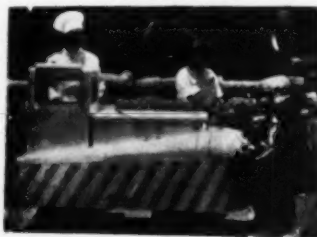
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As I find a seat, the cowboys in the ring, having lassoed and thrown the bull are coiling rope around its middle. A boy, his hands bound in cloth, takes a firm grip of the rope. Suddenly the cowboys scatter and run for their horses. The bull is up. So quick is the boy that his movements can't be followed. It takes the enraged bull less than a second to regain his feet, and in that split second the boy is on his back.

We raise a cheer—not a very big one; this is mere routine so far. The band is now off on its second piece. It sounds much like the first, but the tempo is faster, and the drums and symbals bang furiously.

The bull tries to shake off the foreign thing on his back. In the stands even the spectator dogs sit up. One question is on every mind: Is he a dumb beast, or is there cunning under that thick hide? In answer, the bull charges straight for the fence protecting the stands, and the cowboys perched on it go over backward like a wave breaking. Then he trots along the stockade trying to brush off his tormentor. Smart bull! Round and round he goes, bucking, rearing, smashing against the barriers. But the rider hangs on grimly, his only hold that rope around the bull's middle; his body whips back and forth like a tree in a gale.

At last the bull stands still, his great sides heaving. Victor Gomez twirls his lariat, casts, and neatly rings a foreleg. The other horsemen close in, and the boy slides off. Nobody tells him as he walks away, trying manfully not to stagger, that he has done well. He knows it, we all know it.

After the bull is driven out, there is a long pause. In some other entertainment it would be an intermission. Here it is nothing so formal. A round has been completed (I had arrived in the middle of

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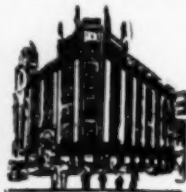
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it), and now is the time to discuss it, to visit friends, to buy icees, cakes, and, in the "pulquerías" across the road, something stronger.

Gomez rides below the stands, preening and prancing. The serape thrown over his saddle is the gaudiest here. He nods graciously here. He nods graciously to the women, exchanges jokes with the men. He stops to talk to a man a few rows below mine. Since the man is Roberto, my gardener, I join him. Among the cowboys a bottle of tequila is being passed around, each man taking a swig. The afternoon is wearing on, and with it sobriety. Tequila fortified, the men will take risks, play with their lives, Gomez tilts the bottle.

"Don't get drunk," I caution unwisely.

"We are all good men here. Señora," bellows Gomez, "and good men must get drunk." A roar of laughter goes up from the stands at my expense. I am grateful when a fresh bull trots into the ring.

"Now!" cries Gomez. "He has killed fifteen men in six years, this one. But we know him, the little one and I."

The horse looks too frail to carry his bulk, but Gomez insists it is brains, not brawn, that counts, and that his "little one" is the best in the world. "It takes more than human intelligence to outwit a bull like El Negro."

In the ring El Negro is calmly taking stock of the situation. The horsemen caper around him, trying to tease him to anger with their serapes, and throwing their ropes. Wise from many years in the ring, El Negro avoids the lariats with scarcely more than a step or a shake of his heavy head. The boys on foot are playing him with capes and rags.

One gets too close. The bull, feinting at another, turns and charges him. Where are those pretty turns practiced at home? Too scared to be clever, the youngster streaks for the stockade. We yell, a real cheer this time—but is it for the pursuer or the pursued? The bull is gaining, and the galloping cowboys are too far behind to save the boy. The horns are reaching for him when, with miraculous intuition, he suddenly throws himself in the dirt and slides, rolling



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safely under the stockade with the bull snorting close on his heels.

"Now El Negro is angry," says Roberto. "Aie," what a fine "jaripeo!"

Gomez' lariat snakes through the air and catches El Negro, snuffing under the fence after his eluder. The other cowboys lend a hand, but he struggles madly until, his legs hopelessly entangled, he is downed. Another young volunteer mounts him.

On his feet again, the bull sees a dozen infuriating serapes. He pursues now one now the other. One reckless cowboy is making his horse dance around the bull in narrowing circles. It is Gomez, full of tequila and bravado. El Negro suddenly wheels so that the boy on his back is almost torn loose, and the next moment Gomez is spurring his horse across the ring, the bull close behind. Speed is wanted now, not intelligence, but Gomez is too heavy for his little one. El Negro grazes the horse's flank with his horns, and Gomez the unconquerable sprawls in the dust. The nemesis of a thousand bulls rolls frantically under the fence.

Ignoring the horse, El Negro looks around for his next victim while the band, beside itself, breaks by mistake into the selection which properly belongs to the final contest between bull and rider.

Usually I sit on the hard bench until the sun goes down and the band plays its third piece, which means "Goodbye. Go with God!" Once the weary five tried to get away without its adios. Indignant cries from the stands recalled them.

But for me today's "jaripeo" is over. I have seen the mighty fall, only to discover that there is no pleasure in it. Gomez has mounted his little one again and sits there with only a shadow of his old bravado. He will ride out this "jaripeo" and many another, but he will never be the same man.



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The Dogs of Ancient Mexico . . .

Continued from page 14

affection; eat bread, ears of green corn, raw or cooked meat or dead and corrupt bodies.

"They also raised in this land some dogs without any hair, or at least very little. Others they raised that were called Xoloitzcuintli, that didn't have any hair and at night they had to wrap them with blankets; these dogs are not born like this but the little puppies are anointed with a resin that they call oxitl, and with this it makes the hair fall off, and the body remains very smooth. Others say that they are born without any hair, in the towns called Teotlizeo, y Toztla. There are other little dogs that they call tlalchichi, short and round, that are very good to eat."

The dogs also gave their lives in ceremonial sacrifices to spare men, as we have a note in the Relación de Valladolid which remarks that if no slaves were at hand for the sacrifices, a dog or other animal was acceptable as a substitute.

The dog that didn't know how to bark, called the itzcuintli, has been identified as the Canis caribaeus Linn. The hairless itzcuintli still exists, but in reduced numbers, and its owners form a rather exclusive society among themselves. The dogs, according to their owners, must be treated very tenderly as they are very sensitive creatures, and at night they are often carried to sleep in their owner's bed, as they have no protection against cold. Others say that they possess curative powers, so this is another reason to take the dog into the bed.

A dog that has not been mentioned in the above chronicles is that called the "chihuahua," which are tiny, frightened-looking dogs, whose eyes seem to bulge out of their sockets, and have very large ears, which extended make them look like a bat about to take flight. They have different colors, varying from white as snow to black, brown, yellow, and mixed. Some can be easily held in the palm of the hand, and are very popular with dog lovers.

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